

Palestinians are ready for tough Jerusalem battle

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Palestinians are busy preparing strategy for a tough battle over sovereignty of east Jerusalem in advance of negotiations with Israel on the Holy City's future.

Well before the formal negotiations begin in May, Israeli and Palestinian academics have been conferring informally outside the region in sessions where they presented their visions of the city's future.

The Palestinians are calling for a sovereign and independent state with its capital in East Jerusalem — the half of the city Israel "annexed" after the 1967 Middle East war and declared part of its "eternal, undivided capital."

A group of Israeli academics last week called during a conference held in Jerusalem for retaining arrangements in the city as they have existed for the last twenty years.

Palestinian counterparts do not agree. "Jerusalem must be the capital for both parties and the basis for this is the U.N. partition resolution of 1947," Ali Jarbawi, a political scientist at Bir Zeit University, said.

"We should have our section and they should have their section," he said. The U.N. resolution called for Jewish and Arab states to be created side by side in Palestine and for Jerusalem to be an international city. "You cannot accept that Jerusalem will be under Israeli sovereignty, rather it must be under shared sovereignty, Palestinian on the Palestinian side and Israeli on the Israeli side," Mr. Jarbawi said.

The Jerusalem issue constitutes a rare point of agreement for all the Palestinian factions, both those opposed to the peace process and those supporting it.

This consensus is apparent in the "Jerusalem Arab Council," which includes representatives of all the fac-

tions, secular and Islamic, plus Christian and Muslim clergymen and academics.

It was founded in 1994 and is headed by Faisal Hussein, who has played a key role in Jerusalem issues for the Palestinian National Authority of Yasser Arafat.

According to a member who requested anonymity, the council "discusses all the matters related to the development of the Jerusalem issue and its future."

It is widely expected that the talks on Jerusalem will be among the most complicated and difficult of all the issues to be dealt with in "final status" negotiations due to begin in May between Israel and the newly-elected Palestinian self-rule government.

Hanan Ashrawi, a member of the elected legislative council, said Israel "has done to Jerusalem a historic injustice that needs to be corrected."

"The question is not merely one of confidence building. It needs a resolution," she said. In an effort to help find a solution, the U.N. plans host an international conference on the future of Jerusalem in Paris March 15-17.

Palestinians also issued a public appeal Tuesday for land claims to former Arab areas that make up much of what is now the Jewish west side of the holy city. "Attention all Palestinians who own property in the western part of Jerusalem," began the written appeal issued by the Palestinian Land and Water Establishment (LAWE).

The statement called on Palestinians whose property "was confiscated during or after the war of 1948" to contact the LAWWE "to ensure that either restitution of property and/or fair compensation remains on the agenda during final status negotiations" with Israel on the future of the Palestinian territories.

Implementing the resolution as written, the official added, "does permit flexibility for the U.N. secretary general to determine exactly how the oil will be sold, exactly how much a majority means, exactly how many monitors would be necessary to ensure that the food and medicine gets to the Iraqi people in general, and what would be necessary to ensure that \$150 million or so got to the Kurds. So there are plenty of technical details to work out."

The talks with the Iraqi government on the oil-for-food formula began Tuesday in New York. The U.N. delegation will be headed by Undersecretary General Hans Corell, the U.N. legal counsel. The Iraqi delegation will be led by Ambassador Abdul Amir Al Anbari, who was Iraq's U.N. ambassador

Lebanese panel alleges abuses of human rights

BEIRUT (R) — Police torture of suspects is widespread in Lebanon and has caused death on more than one occasion, the Lebanese Human Rights Association said in a report published on Tuesday.

"There are many complaints from citizens subjected during arrest in police stations to various types of coercion and torture," the report said as parliament's human rights commission met to discuss similar charges made by two deputies last week.

The Human Rights Association delivered the report on Monday to Beshara Merhej, chairman of the parliamentary human rights commission. It was published in Beirut newspapers on Tuesday.

"The courts hear many cases of suspects telling of acts of violence they undergo during detention which show clearly on their bodies and whose authenticity they check with medical examiners," the report said.

"The acts of torture have led in more than one case to death, which was announced publicly," the report added without citing examples.

"These practices are repeated from one time to another... and hurt Lebanon's reputation," the report added.

It urged the commission to open an inquiry, especially into allegations made by two deputies during last week's stormy budget debate. Christian Deputy Nasri Maalouf accused police, security agencies and investigative authorities during the debate of beating and torturing suspects and committing other human rights violations.

He called for an end to violence against suspects in pre-trial detention and urged the closure of police stations where suspects were tortured. Mr. Maalouf named one as Hbeish police station in west Beirut.

He demanded that parliament pass a law that suspects must be accompanied by a lawyer during initial police interrogations.

Druze Deputy Issam Nonman also told parliament during the debate that Lebanon had a shameful human rights record and serious breaches were committed against suspects under interrogation.

Suspects were subjected to "pressure, torture, humiliation and unjustified long detention periods," he told parliament.

He also said that the commission should investigate the case of a man who was killed in custody.

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U.S. evacuation from Sudan is connected to Abdul Rahman trial

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Two weeks after a New York court handed down a life sentence to Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman for terrorism, the United States announced its diplomats were no longer safe in Sudan and ordered them out.

U.S. officials admit the outcome of what became known as the biggest terrorism trial in U.S. history was one of many considerations in the decision.

But terrorism experts maintain fear of reprisals from forces loyal to Sheikh Abdul Rahman may have been the overriding concern in the move to shut down the embassy and repatriate the 25 staff members.

"U.S. diplomats in Sudan were vulnerable (to attacks) and operated in an unsympathetic environment," says Bernard Reich, a specialist on Middle East terrorism.

"The sheikh's followers could have well seized the opportunity to take revenge on American targets," he said.

Sheikh Abdul Rahman, found guilty along with nine others of conspiring to wage a campaign of terrorism against New York City landmarks, entered the United States in July 1990 from Sudan.

He was also linked to the February 1993 bombing of the World Trade Centre, which killed six and injured some 1,000 people but he was not charged with any wrongdoing in that crime.

The blind Egyptian cleric, who inspired his followers to attack the United States for its pro-Israel policy, was also found guilty of plotting to assassinate Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak during a visit to New York that was later cancelled.

In a resolution adopted Wednesday, the same day the United States ordered its diplomats home from Khartoum, the United Nations called on Sudan to cease supporting "terrorism" activities and hand over three Islamic militants wanted in connection with last June's assassination attempt against Mr. Mubarak in Addis Ababa.

An administration official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said fear of reprisals from Sheikh Abdul Rahman's followers was "part of the big puzzle."

But the official cautioned that over the past months there had been an increasing number of disturbing reports about "terrorist activities" in Sudan that prompted action on the part of the U.S. administration.

The United States has accused Sudan of providing safe havens for groups who operate training camps in the west African country with links to Libya and Iran.

In 1993, the administration, under pressure from the U.S. Congress, added Sudan to its list of states supporting "terrorism," a measure that provides for sanctions and limited contacts.

"The U.S. believes this decision was necessary in order to ensure the safety of American personnel," the State Department said Wednesday after ordering its personnel to leave Khartoum.

But the State Department did not opt to break off diplomatic relations with Sudan, a decision that was seen as an attempt to keep dialogue open with the regime in Khartoum.

Experts said Sheikh Abdul Rahman's trial was seen among radical as a diabolic pact between the United States and Egypt against Islam, a perception that was reinforced with U.S. hacking of the U.N. resolution against Sudan.

Ken Katzman, a Middle East expert at the Congressional Research Service, said the U.S. decision to pull out of Sudan was also a signal to Egypt that it supports efforts to maintain a secular state.

"Mr. Mubarak is a friend and an ally in the region, not just in the Middle East peace process but also against Iraq," he said, referring to U.S. efforts to keep a tight lid on international sanctions against Baghdad.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Israel names first envoy to Tunisia

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel has appointed a Tunisian-born career diplomat as its first official envoy to Tunisia, Deputy Foreign Minister Eli Dayan said Tuesday. Shalom Cohen, 40, will open an Israeli interests section in the Belgian embassy in Tunis on April 15, he said. The two countries agreed to establish relations at the interests section level at a Washington meeting last month between Israeli Foreign Minister Ehud Barak and his Tunisian counterpart Habib Ben Yahia. Mr. Cohen, who came to Israel in 1966, is a son of Rabbi Yonah Cohen, a leader of the Tunisian Jewish community in the 1950s. Most of Tunisia's 110,000 Jews subsequently emigrated to Israel. "I remember that the Jewish community in Tunisia enjoyed equal rights with the country's other inhabitants in a liberal, atmosphere unlike that in any other Arab state at the time," Mr. Cohen told journalists. Mr. Cohen has worked in the past in Belgium, Burma, Canada, Ethiopia, the United States and Zaire.

Israel objects to PNA envoy in Cyprus

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel protested to Cyprus on Monday after it recognised the senior Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) official on the island as the representative of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA). Israel's deputy foreign minister, Eli Dayan, said the accord granting the Palestinians limited self-rule forbade the PNA from having representation abroad. "Israel is opposed categorically to such a designation because it contradicts the autonomy accord signed between Israel and the PLO," he wrote, according to Israeli officials. The accord extending self-rule which was signed in Washington on Sept. 28, 1995 said the autonomy council elected last month would have no power or responsibility in the domain of external affairs.

"In Nicosia, the PLO representative at the centre of the dispute, Samir Abu Ghazaleh, said he was 'astonished' by the Israeli protest. He told AFP that all official PLO representatives abroad, whatever their title or diplomatic status, had represented the PNA since it was created in the first stage of autonomy in 1994. He cited as three examples the Palestinian representatives to Jordan, Egypt and Qatar, who he said already had the title of representative of the PNA.

Egypt gets internal intelligence chief

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt's Interior Minister Hassan Al Ali appointed a new head of the country's internal intelligence agency, State Security Investigations (SSI) on Monday, ministry sources said. General Habib Al Adil, formerly the minister's assistant for security, was named to replace the outgoing General Ahmad Al Adil, who was made the minister's assistant for economic affairs, the sources said. Ahmad Al Adil, whom General Ali appointed when he took the ministry in 1993, was a leading figure in the state's fierce campaign against militants fighting to topple the government of President Hosni Mubarak. He was credited with a number of successful blows which security dealt to extremists in the latter part of 1995, including the breaking up of a number of armed cells and the discovery of large weapons caches, the sources said. But no reason was given for the shakeup in the ministry.

Ex-Shin Bet chief seeking ambassadorship to Japan

TEL AVIV (AFP) — The outgoing head of Israel's internal security agency, who resigned over the assassination of prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, has asked to be named as the Jewish state's ambassador to Japan, it was reported Tuesday. The daily Haaretz said Karmi Gilon, 45, had asked Prime Minister Shimon Peres for the Tokyo job and has the backing of the foreign ministry. Mr. Gilon, 45, resigned last month as head of Shin Bet after receiving a formal reprimand over the breakdown in security which permitted a radical Jewish nationalist, Yigal Amir, to shoot Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin last November. He remains at the head of Shin Bet pending the formal takeover in coming weeks by his appointed successor, Ami Ayalon. Mr. Gilon was a career agent in Shin Bet, paradoxically building a reputation as the security agency's top expert on Jewish extremists like Amir. He was one of seven Shin Bet and police officials to receive a reprimand from the commission set up to investigate the circumstances of the Rabin assassination and could face legal action.

100-year-old rabbi quits prestigious school

BNEI BRAK (AFP) — Rabbi Eliezer Shach, the 100-year-old head of Israel's most prestigious ultra-orthodox theological school, is quitting in a doctrinal row with his colleagues, associates said Tuesday. Rabbi Shach, an influential leader of the United Torah Judaism party, told association he was leaving the Poniovez Yeshiva, in Bnei Brak near Tel Aviv, because of "spiritual differences" with other directors of the Talmudic institute. Students and former students, who number in the tens of thousands across the globe, turned out to support the aged rabbi, distributing leaflets in front of the school asking him to reconsider his decision. "We have only one master and his work is in danger," one of the demonstrators said. Rabbi Shach has headed the school for 50 years. The Poniovez Yeshiva follows the so-called Lithuanian approach of rational research into Jewish holy writings, in contrast to the more emotional bent of the Hassidic movement. In addition to his role as a spiritual leader of United Torah Judaism, which has four deputies in the parliament, Rabbi Shach was a founder of another ultra-orthodox party, Shas, which has six deputies.

Resolution 986 will not be amended, American officials assert

UNITED NATIONS (USIA) — The so-called "oil talks" between the United Nations and Iraq will not include amending the terms set out by the U.N. Security Council when it adopted its oil-for-food resolution in April 1995, according to U.S. officials.

U.S. Ambassador Madeleine Albright "has made clear that the United States does not believe that any negotiations on implementing (Resolution) 986 should include the possibility of amending 986. These are negotiations about the modalities and 'the hows' and of implementation," said a U.S. official Feb. 5 on the eve of the talks.

"In our discussions with key countries in the region as well as key countries on the council we have not heard any delegation propose amendments to 986 as the outcome of these negotiations... We are satisfied that all council members believe 986 should be implemented as written," the U.S. official said.

"We have, obviously, very strongly argued that this resolution is the litmus test of whether Saddam Hussein

wants more food and medicine for his people. It's structured for that purpose. If he wants to change it and use it for some other purpose, we'll know that when the talks begin. If he wants to meet the needs of his people, we'll know that because he'll negotiate the technical details," the official said.

Implementing the resolution as written, the official added, "does permit flexibility for the U.N. secretary general to determine exactly how the oil will be sold, exactly how much a majority means, exactly how many monitors would be necessary to ensure that the food and medicine gets to the Iraqi people in general, and what would be necessary to ensure that \$150 million or so got to the Kurds. So there are plenty of technical details to work out."

The talks with the Iraqi government on the oil-for-food formula began Tuesday in New York. The U.N. delegation will be headed by Undersecretary General Hans Corell, the U.N. legal counsel. The Iraqi delegation will be led by Ambassador Abdul Amir Al Anbari, who was Iraq's U.N. ambassador

during the invasion of Kuwait and is currently Iraq's envoy to UNESCO.

In April 1995 the Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 986 allowing Iraq to sell up to \$1,000 million of oil every 90 days under U.N. supervision in order to buy humanitarian supplies for Iraqi civilians.

The terms of the resolution stipulated that the proceeds of the oil sales would be deposited in a special account and distributed according to a set formula: 30 per cent to the Compensation Fund dealing with claims resulting from the invasion of Kuwait. Two to four per cent to pay for the U.N. administration of the oil sales, six per cent for the Special Commission overseeing the destruction of Iraqi weapons, and the remainder for the humanitarian aid.

The council stipulated that a major portion of the oil must be shipped through the Turkish pipeline and said that about \$20 to \$30 million of the proceeds from the first oil sale are to pay for repairs to the pipeline, which has gone unused since the oil embargo was imposed in 1990. Iraq is also allowed to sell an addi-

tion \$289 million of oil — above the \$1,000 million — to pay the tariffs charged by Turkey.

The council also said that \$150 million of the aid money must be turned over to the U.N. programme for the Kurds in northern Iraq and the secretary general must report to the council every 90 days on whether Iraq is using the funds to provide food, medicine, and other humanitarian supplies to the Iraqi people.

One of the changes between the earlier oil-for-food resolutions and Resolution 986 is that the earlier ones required the U.N. to supervise the distribution of the food and medicine. In 986 the U.N. was given the responsibility of assessing the impact of the distribution as a means of determining whether the food and medicine go to the Iraqi people in need. "There are three basic principles of 986 that the Iraqis objected to when they refused to begin the negotiations last year," the U.S. official pointed out. "They are: that the majority (of oil) go through the Turkish pipeline; the fact that roughly one-third, or about \$350 million, would go to

Compensation Commission; and that \$150 million of the \$650 million would have to go to the Kurds."

Those terms "were written in the resolution. There is no delegation that we're aware of that has proposed making any changes" in the terms, the official said. "They are not now on the table for discussion."

But the subjects for the talks could be the modalities of how the oil is sold, who monitors the sales, how the food and medicine are distributed, and who monitors the impact of that distribution, the official suggested.

Iraq originally rejected the resolution, holding out hope that the oil embargo would be lifted under the terms of the ceasefire resolution which stipulated that when the Special Commission overseeing the destruction of Iraqi weapons (UNSCOM) had certified that Iraq had complied with all its requirements, Iraq could resume the unrestricted sale of oil.

However, during most of 1995 UNSCOM gathered new and damaging information revealing a weapons

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 77311-19

PROGRAMME TWO

14:00 The Flintstones
14:30 Speed Racer
15:00 Doc — Namic Heavy in Jordan
15:30 Islamic Antiquities in Jordan
16:00 Doc — Oriental Rugs
17:00 Doc — Planete En Equilibre
17:30 Scie-Les Dame de la Cae
18:00 Le Jour d'aujourd'hui
19:15 Magazine — Sports Et Musique
19:30 News Headlines
19:35 Comedy — Evening Show
20:00 Doc — Oriental Rugs
20:30 Doc — Oriental Rugs
21:10 Document — The Day Big...

PRAYER TIMES

05:03 Fajr
06:32 Sunrise/Duha
11:50 Asr
14:51 Maghrib
17:18 Maghrib
18:37 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swedish Tel. 810741
Assemblies of God Church Tel. 627285
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624591
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637441
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrasanta Church Tel. 623566
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 652826
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775281
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 625526
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624328
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457
The Larger-Day Saints Tel. 624032
Church of Nazareth Tel. 627591
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811293

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology
Warm weather conditions will prevail with temperatures above

average and winds south-westerly active. In Aqaba, wind will be southerly active and sea rough.

Man/Mar. temp. Amman 7/18
Aqaba 15/25
Desert 6/19
Jordan Valley 12/24

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 19 Aqaba 23 Humidity readings: Amman 22 per cent. Aqaba 34 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Isam Al-Astar 809504
Dr. Awn Al-Hawamdeh 832580
Dr. Khalid Al-Astar 666673
Dr. Jum'a Abu Dhiab 758848
First pharmacy 661912
Firdous pharmacy 786356
Al Asana pharmacy 637055
Naroukh pharmacy 625672
Al Salam pharmacy 637630
Yasir pharmacy 637640
Simoun pharmacy 625672
Nour pharmacy 847032

IRABID:
Dr. Ahmad Qanu 201741
Al Oudh pharmacy 1-1

ZARQA:
Dr. Zuhair Al-Qadi 080609
Khalil pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES
Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Emergency 611111
Civil Defence Immediate 630841
Rescue 199
Rescue Police 192 621111
Fire Brigade 617777
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 623802
Traffic Police 896301
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 618800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage Complaints 817467
Amman Municipality 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 810230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101
Abdullah Telephone Repair 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 186-53201
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 186-53201

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Husseini Medical Centre 8181332
Khalil Maternity, J. Amn. 6428116
Akil Maternity, J. Amn. 6424112
Mafes, J. Amman 636141
Palestine, Shmouan 67071
Shmouan Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Musheir Hospital 6872294
Queen Alia Hospital 60234950
Al-Ahli, Abdull 6641616
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 7771013
Al-Bachir, J. Ashrafieh 7751126
Army/Marsha 8181015
Queen Alia Hospital 60234950
Amal Hospital 674155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199
ZARQA:
Zarqa Civil Hospital 09993323
Zarqa National Hospital 09995041
Ibn Sina Hospital 09996732
Al-Hilma Modern Hospital 09999091
IRABID:
Prince Basma Hospital 01227555
Greek Catholic Hospital 01227225
Ibn Al-Nabee Hospital 01234701

AQABA:
Prince Haya Hospital 01331411

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. 01853286-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

08:35 Jeddah (RJ)
08:55 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:15 Larnaca, Damascus (RJ)
10:45 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
14:00 Istanbul (RJ)
17:55 Thessalon, Montreal (RJ)
18:00 Madrid, Geneva (RJ)
18:05 Brussels, Paris (RJ)
18:05 Rome (RJ)
18:10 Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)
18:25 London, Berlin (RJ)
18:40 Jakarta, Abu Dhabi (add) (RJ)
23:20 Beirut (RJ)
00:10 Cairo (RJ)
01:30 Jeddah (add) (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

09:50 Cairo (MS)
10:30 Jeddah (SV)
12:15 Karachi, Abu Dhabi (PK)
14:20 Algiers (AI)
16:20 Soma (HY)
20:10 Beirut (ME)
22:05 Larnaca (CY)
22:45 Athens, Beirut (OA)
23:25 Amsterdam (KL)
23:59 London, Beirut (BA)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

09:45 Rome (RJ)
10:15 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
10:45 Beirut, London (RJ)
11:15 Istanbul (RJ)
14:10 Colombo (RJ)
19:35 Beirut (RJ)
20:05 Riyadh, Dhahran (RJ)
20:10 Cairo (RJ)
20:25 New Delhi (RJ)
20:30 Jeddah (add) (RJ)
21:10 Calcutta, Bangkok (RJ)
21:15 Dubai, Muscat (RJ)
22:45 Soma (HY)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

07:45 Beirut (ME)
09:15 London (RJ)
10:40 Cairo (MS)
12:00 Jeddah (SV)
13:25 Abu Dhabi, Karachi (PK)
15:20 Shingai (AI)
21:00 Soma (HY)
22:50 Larnaca (CY)

HIJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman 8:00



IFTAR WITH THEIR MAJESTIES: Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor Tuesday host an iftar for the Jubilee School's steering committee, staff and students at Al Hussein Sports City. The Jubilee School, which commemorates King Hussein's Silver Jubilee accession to the throne, is an independent co-educational secondary school for outstanding scholarship students from the country and the region, with special emphasis on Jordan's less developed areas. Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti, Chief of the Royal Court Awn Khasawneh and Minister of Education Munther Masri attended the iftar (photo by Crystal).



Her Majesty Queen Noor Tuesday chairs a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Noor Al Hussein Foundation (photo by Crystal).

Queen, board review NHF 1995 achievements

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor Tuesday chaired the Noor Al Hussein Foundation's (NHF) Board of Trustees meeting at which the NHF's achievements over the past year were discussed, a Royal Court statement said.

These achievements, said the statement, include several of the foundation's major national projects such as the Jubilee School, which has commenced the first phase of construction at its permanent campus in Yajouz; the Jordan Design and Trade Centre, which is completing its plan to become a national design and trade institution and is developing trademark, design and copyright laws for the protection of handicrafts artisans; the Population Programme for the Grassroots, which, with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), is expanding in villages throughout the country; as well as the Quality of Life Project, which, in collaboration with the World Health Organisation, is establishing a regional advocacy, training and coordination centre in Jordan and developing outreach capacities in the Arab World.

During the meeting, Queen Noor and the board expressed their hope that the NHF's national projects would continue their pattern of national-institutionalisation and self-reliance that has already been achieved by other projects such as the Jerash Festival, the National Music Conservatory and the SOS Villages, the statement said.

Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti, who is a member of NHF board, affirmed his government's commitment to support development projects that address the national priorities of the citizens of Jordan, the statement said.

'Officials work on reviving National Security Council'

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The appointment of former General Intelligence Directorate Chief Mustafa Qaisi as rapporteur of the National Security Council on Sunday by His Majesty King Hussein has meant the revival of the council, according to well-informed sources.

Mr. Qaisi, also appointed as the King's advisor for national security affairs, told the Jordan Times that the structure of the council is currently being worked on, and is expected to be finalised in the next few weeks.

Senior sources told the Jordan Times that although the council has existed for more than 30 years, it has done so only in name. Other sources, however, maintain that the council did meet intermittently in the 1960s.

According to sources contacted by the Jordan Times, the council is presided over by the King, and its members include the prime minister, minister of interior, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, director general of the Public Security Department, directors of both the General Intelligence Directorate, and the Department of Military Intelligence, as well as

other high-ranking security personnel.

One senior source said the council primarily deals with internal issues relating to "the safety and stability of the country," adding that the decisions made by the council are carried out by the various security agencies in the Kingdom.

The council, according to sources, is similar in format to the U.S. National Security Council, which is responsible for the supervision of the country's intelligence community.

The American National Security Council comprises the president of the U.S. as chairman, the vice president, the secretaries of state and defence, the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, and other officials whom the president may appoint with Senate approval.

Its staff is headed by a special assistant for national security affairs and is part of the office of the president.

A senior source told the Jordan Times, however, that whereas the council in the U.S. is considered a department, the Jordanian National Security Council is only a committee. The source also added that the Jordanian council has been part of the state apparatus, as opposed to being part of the Royal Court.

'Ministry of Justice will not drop case contesting validity of bar association elections'

By Lola Keilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Khalaf Masaadeh, a defeated candidate in the 1995 Jordan Bar Association (JBA) elections, denied on Tuesday that he and the Ministry of Justice intend to drop the cases contesting the validity of the elections.

Mr. Masaadeh told the Jordan Times that the case was now with the Higher Court of Justice and thus it could not be dropped.

"The case is not only against the presidential seat, which is now vacant," said Mr. Masaadeh, referring to the appointment this week of JBA President Kamal Nasser as minister of administrative development. "It is also against the elected council and the overseeing committee."

Mr. Masaadeh who represents 120 lawyers, was commenting on a statement by Ziad Khasawneh, the vice-president of the association, saying that according to the Ministry of Justice the case is closed.

Mr. Khasawneh, who will run for the association's presidency in the April election, added that sources had confirmed that the Higher Court of Justice will issue its ruling on the case on Feb. 7 considering the case as invalid.

Two complaints were filed in March against the president of the association and the elected members of the JBA. The first was made by the then Minister of Justice Hisham Tal because he had instructed the bar association to strike all West Bank members from the association's roster and to prohibit their participation in the 1995 elections due to the Kingdom's 1985 decision to sever legal and administrative ties with the West Bank.

The second complaint was brought by Mr. Masaadeh who charges that: Lawyers were not legally notified of elections beforehand; that the elections were not held in the suitable place; that the budget was ratified during the elections by show of hands rather than a secret ballot; that the budget was not presented to lawyers before elections; that the elections overseeing committee was informally appointed by the former council and president instead of being elected by the assembly; that the voting hours extended their legal limitation; that voters were not given a ballot card to be validated; and that the ballot tables were not organised to and the number of voters at each booth did not correspond to ballot tables.



Ministry of Water and Irrigation Secretary General Qusay Qteishat and a representative of the Japanese International Cooperation Agency Tuesday sign minutes of a meeting on discussions on water supply and management projects (Petra photo).

Jordan, Japan sign minutes of meeting on water supply projects

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan and the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Tuesday signed minutes of their discussions on water supply and management which they held last week.

A statement from the Ministry of Water and Irrigation said that the talks covered water supply to Amman from the Deir Alla area in the Jordan Valley through a project that would raise supplies from 45 million cubic metres annually to 90 million as a

first stage.

Ministry Secretary General Qusay Qteishat, who signed the minutes with the JICA representative, said the project entails enlarging the facility at Zay, west of Amman, to store water pumped from the Jordan Valley on its way to Amman and to boost the capacity of the pipelines carrying the water from the valley.

According to Mr. Qteishat, this, as well as the other stages of the project will be financed through

loans and grants from JICA, adding that the project, which will be completed in six years, starts its first stage in June.

Meanwhile, it was announced here Tuesday that a Japanese team of technicians and economists will arrive in Amman on Feb. 11.

The team will carry out a study on Jordan's economy and Jordanian developments as well as cooperation between the Japanese and Jordanian governments in their implementation.

Study to construct new railway line in S. Jordan underway

AQABA (Petra) — With phosphate production at several Jordan Phosphate Mines Company (JPMC) mines in southern Jordan on the rise, the Aqaba Railways Corporation (ARC) is studying the feasibility of constructing a new 25-kilometre railway line linking the Shidiq mine with the nearest railway station along the line to Aqaba, a railway official said Tuesday.

According to Ziad Darwish, director of the Aqaba railway station ARC annually transports 3.976 million tonnes (mainly for export) from the mines to Aqaba.

He said the JPMC expects to increase that amount to 4.5 million tonnes by the year 2000.

Mr. Darwish said the expansion at the Shidiq mine, the largest in Jordan, is aimed at boosting production to 10 million tonnes per year by the end of the century adding that recent studies on Shidiq showed a production capability of at least another 100 years.

The ARC also transports phosphate from the other two mines at Al Hassa and Abyad to Aqaba by rail and also utilises 300 trucks, each with a capacity of 42 tonnes, to haul phosphate to the port city, said Mr. Darwish.

He said that in addition to building the 25-kilometre line, the ARC will continue to rely on truck shipments for its operations.

Last month the JPMC announced 1995 exports of phosphates totalled 3.88 million tonnes and sales of 1.14 million tonnes to the industrial fertiliser complex in Aqaba.

It said its exports of phosphate and phosphate fertilisers in 1995 earned it \$277 million.

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WHAT'S GOING ON

FILM

* "Prince Suspect" (Part I) at the British Council at 8:00 p.m.

PLAY/CONCERTS

* "Ramadan Supermarket" (in Arabic) at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* Engravings by French artists at the French Cultural Centre (until Feb. 29).

* Printmaking and paintings by Jordanian artist Yasser Dweik at Darat Al Funun, Jahal Luweibdeh. Also displaying paintings and sculptures by contemporary artists (until Feb. 18).

Czech virtuoso to grace Jordanian stage

AMMAN (J.T.) — Although the National Music Conservatory (NMC) of the Noor Al Hussein Foundation has organised numerous music activities featuring top musicians and performing ensembles from all over the world, its next music activity has been described as "a rare and exceptional event in Jordan."

Organised by the NMC and the Czech embassy in Jordan, in cooperation with Czech Airlines and the Marriott Hotel, the leading violinist of the Czech Republic, Václav Hudecek, will perform in a violin recital on Sunday at the Royal Cultural Centre, Main Theatre, an NMC statement said.

Hailed as one of the best three contemporary violinists in the world, Václav Hudecek started playing the violin at the age of five and continued his studies under the supervision of the legendary violinist

David Oistrach.

His career began when he was 15-years-old, playing Paganini's Concerto in D major with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in London in 1976.

Since then he has performed with world orchestras such as the Berliner Philharmoniker, the Gewandhaus Orchestra, the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra, the NHK Tokyo, and the Moscow State Philharmonic Orchestra.

Mr. Hudecek has also been a guest at international music festivals such as Salzburg, Athens, Perth, Dubrovnik, Helsinki and Istanbul.

"He is an excellent interpreter of virtuoso violin concertos and violin sonatas."

Since 1990, he has been playing on the Liboni, a unique and rare type of violin that was made in the workshop of the great



lulist Antonio Stradivari.

Accompanying Mr. Hudecek on the piano will be his compatriot Petr Adamec who has been cooperating with Mr. Hudecek since 1977.

Mr. Adamec is an "out-

standing interpreter of chamber piano compositions."

He is also an associate professor at the Faculty of Music at the Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts in Prague.

The programme of the recital will include Mozart's Sonata in G Major, Beethoven's Sonata No. 1 in D Major, Schubert's Duo Sonata in A Major and Dvorak's Sonatina in G Major.

Russia forces chief warns over rallies in Chechnya

MOSCOW (R) — Russia's military commander in Chechnya issued a "shoot-to-kill" warning Tuesday for rallies by Chechen separatist supporters were used as a screen for armed attacks on his troops.

Lieutenant-General Vyacheslav Tikhomirov told Interfax News Agency that fighters loyal to separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev were trying to infiltrate protest gatherings in the centre of the Chechen capital Grozny.

Gen. Tikhomirov, speaking as several thousand demonstrators massed for a third day outside the gated Presidential Palace in Grozny, said Russian forces were protecting government buildings and had the force to repel any armed attacks.

"There will be no other way out of this situation. We will decisively shoot to kill," he said.

Defying calls by the Russian army and pro-Moscow authorities to disperse, several thousand pro-Dudayev supporters gathered in central Grozny Tuesday, chanting slogans for Russia to withdraw its troops from the territory.

Their numbers were swelled by protesters who arrived from other parts of Chechnya, Interfax said quoting regional Interior Ministry officials. But eyewitnesses said that by mid-afternoon the crowds had thinned out considerably.

In violence elsewhere in the territory, Interfax said that in the past 24 hours up to Tuesday morning, one

Russian soldier had been killed and three wounded in attacks by separatist fighters on Russian army positions.

The demonstrators began rallying Sunday after Russian President Boris Yeltsin, with his eye on June 16 presidential elections, signalled he was ready to put forward a new plan to settle the deeply unpopular conflict.

No details have been made public of his proposed blueprint.

But these are expected to emerge Wednesday in Moscow at a scheduled meeting of Mr. Yeltsin's inner circle of advisers, the powerful security council.

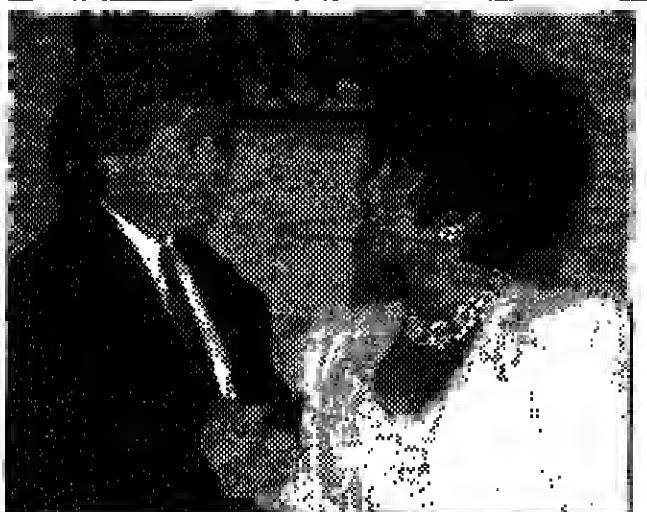
Mr. Yeltsin sent troops into the territory in December 1994 to crush a drive for independence. The

intervention led to a conflict in which many thousands have died and a peace settlement would greatly help his chances of re-election.

In Grozny, as in previous days, the protesters waved green Islamic flags and carried portraits of Mr. Dudayev, who was forced to flee the capital about a year ago after a Russian advance reduced the palace and much of the city to a burnt-out shell.

Doku Zavgayev, head of the pro-Moscow administration in Chechnya, however ruled out any withdrawal by Russian troops.

"There can be no possibility of a withdrawal of federal troops from the territory of Chechnya, even partially," Mr. Zavgayev was quoted as saying by Interfax.



Actress Liz Taylor has filed for divorce from her seventh husband Larry Fortensky, according to court documents Monday. Taylor cited "irreconcilable differences" in the petition. She had announced a "trial separation" for the couple last August (Reuter photo)

Liz Taylor files for divorce — yet again

LOS ANGELES (R) — Critics of the marriage said it was a virtual union between the beauty and the beast — a much-wed Hollywood goddess and a lowly construction worker — and predicted it would never last. And it didn't.

The goddess, Elizabeth Taylor, one of Hollywood's most glamorous stars, finally did what most had predicted she formally ended her 52-month marriage to her seventh husband, burly Larry Fortensky, when she filed for divorce Monday.

Taylor, who announced a "trial separation" from Fortensky on Aug. 31, cited "irreconcilable differences" in the routine three-page petition she signed and filed with the California Superior Court in Los Angeles.

No date was set for a hearing and the petition did not specify how the couple's assets would be divided from a marriage that lasted, on paper at least, four years and four months.

"The whole thing is going to be handled privately," said Taylor's lawyer, Neil Papiano. "Everyone is cooperating. I think it will be handled well and in a fashion that will be pleasing to everyone."

He declined to say whether the two-time Academy Award winner and the twice-divorced building labourer had a prenuptial agreement. But he said that Taylor still had affection for Fortensky and that she was getting on with her life as a single woman once again.

Taylor, who will be 64 on Feb. 27, met Fortensky at the Betty Ford Clinic, where they were both undergoing treatment — Taylor reportedly for dependency on painkillers.

Fortensky, then 39, married Taylor on Oct. 5, 1991 in what was supposed to be a private ceremony at pop singer Michael Jackson's Neverland estate in central California, but press helicopters hovering above and photographers hiding in bushes made it a public event.

It was Taylor's eighth marriage, although her husbands numbered only seven — she was married twice to Welsh actor Richard Burton.

Taylor's image as the pure, violet-eyed girl who burst onto the big screen at the age of 10 was dissipated by an unending series of headline stories over her many marriages, her jewels, weight problems, drugs and alcohol.

She won her first two Academy Awards in 1960 for her 1960 role as a call girl in *Butterfield 8*, and the second for her 1966 portrayal of a foul-mouthed, alcoholic wife in *Edward Albee's Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*

She married 21-year-old Conrad "Nicky" Hilton, son of the hotel magnate, when she was 18. The marriage lasted 205 days.

At 19, she married Michael Wilding, a man twice her age. That lasted 4-1/2 years and produced two children, Michael and Christopher.

In 1957, just after a spinal operation, the 24-year-old Taylor married Mike Todd, who had a son older than his new wife and a grandson as well.

She gave birth to a daughter, Liza, later that year. The marriage is said to have had a profound influence on her both as a woman and an actress, but it came to a tragic end in March 1958 when Todd died in the crash of his plane, *The Lucky Liz*.

Ten months later, Taylor married singer Eddie Fisher, Todd's best friend, who divorced his wife, actress Debbie Reynolds, on the same day.

There followed a torrid affair while filming *Cleopatra* with her celluloid Antony — Richard Burton. She divorced Fisher in 1964 and married Burton.

In July 1973, the marriage broke up and in June 1974 they divorced. "We have loved each other too much," she said.

Sixteen months later, on Oct. 10, 1975, Taylor and Burton remarried in a brief and quiet ceremony in Botswana in Africa. Their second marriage lasted only eight months.

Taylor did not stay single long. On Dec. 4, 1976, she married John Warner, a former U.S. Navy secretary who later became U.S. senator from Virginia. But life in Washington did not appeal to her and they divorced in 1982.

Keating tempts voters with health package

CANBERRA (R) — Australian Labour Prime Minister Paul Keating, fighting for his 13-year-old government's survival,

Tuesday tempted voters with 1 billion Australian dollars (\$750 million) over the next two years to ease their number one concern — health.

"The election will decide the kind of health care system we will have over the next generation and, in so doing, it will decide in a large part the kind of society we leave our children," Mr. Keating said.

Mr. Keating, the underdog in the March 2 election battle against conservative opposition leader John Howard, announced the ambitious package in the southern city of Melbourne.

"It will substantially determine the kind of country Australia will be," he said.

Opinion polls show health care, and how to pay for it, heads Australians' list of concerns and major issues.

Mr. Keating's package, his biggest election pledge so far, would cost 1 billion Australian dollars in the first two years and more than 400 million Australian dollars (\$300 million) a year after that.

The money will be spent on cutting surgery delays, rebates for private health insurance fees and improving care for the elderly.

Analysts say the package revamps Labour's public health Medicare scheme and could help it peg back the opposition's strong opinion poll lead, which has remained largely unchanged since campaigning began 10 days ago.

And it would help deflect attention from the likely fall of the Labour state government in Queensland, in a

political crisis which Labour strategists say could damage Mr. Keating's re-election bid.

Labour lost a vital state by-election at the weekend, leaving Queensland's Labour government with the same number of seats as the Liberal opposition and the casting vote in the hands of an independent.

Mr. Keating, who has spent more than half his life on the political battlefield, is seeking to lead Labour to an historic sixth straight election win.

Two opinion polls out this week show Mr. Keating's government has made marginal gains on the opposition's lead, but Mr. Howard said Tuesday the signs were still good for an opposition victory.

"The mood is one of confidence, we're positive but with the recognition that we still have a long way to go," he said.

Mr. Howard said his opponent was playing catch-up politics, copying already foreshadowed elements of the opposition's health plans, due to be announced this week.

"Forty-eight hours ago, rebates for private health insurance were (an) anathema — something's happened on the road to Melbourne," Mr. Howard told reporters in Adelaide.

"He's had a Damascus-like conversion on the case of rebates for private health insurance."

Mr. Keating's Labour government and Mr. Howard's opposition coalition of Liberal and National parties have over the past few weeks promised billions of dollars in spending in a bid to lure voters and win the support of key interest groups.

4 killed in cargo plane crash in U.S.

ST. JOHNS, Ariz. (R) — A cargo plane bound for Mexico carrying humane supplies crashed and exploded in an empty field in a heavily populated neighbourhood Monday, killing all four people on board, authorities said.

The unidentified pilot was hailed as a hero by residents who said he apparently steered the crippled aircraft away from homes and an elementary school only a few hundred metres from the crash site.

Witnesses near the scene in St. Johns, Arizona, about 320 kilometres northeast of Phoenix, said the Convair C-131E plane, carrying donated firefighting and medical equipment from California, exploded on impact, sending flames more than 300 metres into the air.

Several residents said the pilot's action saved the town from further tragedy in the Monday morning crash.

"In my mind, the pilot is truly a hero," said Dorothy

Pulsipher, who watched the fiery crash from her office window at the St. Johns Chamber of Commerce.

"He probably knew he was going down and decided to do what he could to spare the lives of the people here."

In addition to the school, the surrounding area included homes, a building housing a preschool programme, a church and a utility company office.

Susan Smith, who works for the St. Johns Police Department, said the accident shocked the community of about 3,500 people.

"I just thank God the pilot knew what he was doing," Ms. Smith said. "God bless his soul. This is unbelievable."

Airport officials said the 30-seat plane spent Sunday night in St. Johns on a refueling stopover before leaving for Mexico on a mission to deliver donated firefighting and medical equipment to Mexican officials.



Pope John Paul II greets two children that met him upon his arrival in Guatemala City at the start of a 7 day trip to Central and South America. The Pope will also visit Nicaragua, El Salvador and Venezuela (Reuter photo)

Pope to visit C. America's shrine of peace

GUATEMALA CITY (R) — Pope John Paul was expected to travel Tuesday, the second day of his Latin American tour, to a Guatemalan town which symbolises pilgrimage and peace, having found a ready audience for his message that war must stop.

Hundreds of thousands of Guatemalans cheered the Pontiff on his arrival to a tumultuous welcome Monday at the start of his 69th foreign trip. The faithful carpeted the avenues with mosaic patterns made from coloured sawdust and flower petals.

The Pope pleaded for the Guatemalan government to reach a lasting peace agreement with left-wing guerrillas and end a war that has claimed 140,000 lives in the past three decades.

"A real peace is urgent," the Pope said. "A peace which is the gift of God and fruit of dialogue in the spirit of reconciliation."

He was to likely return to the theme of peace Tuesday in the town of Esquipulas, a town famous in Central America for political and religious reasons.

Central American presidents signed an agreement here 10 years ago, paving the way for an end to civil war in Nicaragua and El Salvador, two other countries Pope John Paul will visit on his week-long pilgrimage to Latin America.

The local slogan for the Papal trip "together for peace" reflects Pope John Paul's wish to heal past wounds in Central America where more than 300,000 people have died in revolutions, coups and wars in the past 35 years.

"The first time I came here it was a shooting range for the superpowers who met here and clashed here and these poor people suffered because of this," the Pope said aboard the aircraft.

Esquipulas, 200 kilometres east of

Guatemala City and close to the border with El Salvador and Honduras, is also home to one of the region's most important icons.

The Black Christ is a sculpture of Jesus on the cross hewn 400 years ago from cedar wood and believers say it has miraculous healing powers.

Thousands of peasants streamed into the town ahead of the Pontiff's visit on foot, on horseback or by bus. Many of them hoped Pope John Paul's visit would bring them a better life and help rescue them from the appalling poverty in which they are mired.

The numbers of worshippers as well as the warmth of the Pope's reception in Guatemala City served to underline the continuing popularity of the Catholic Church in a country whose government institutions — particularly the army — are deeply distrusted.

This comes despite a surge in the popularity of rival Protestant Evangelical sects, which claim to have wooed more than a quarter of the country away from Rome.

Speaking from his chartered jet en route to Guatemala, the Pontiff referred to the region's other major problem — the gaping divide between a small rich elite and the poor masses, many of whom earn less than \$2 a day.

"Social problems are the problem of the whole world," he told reporters in a news conference relayed to Earth by satellite phone from the aircraft. "The church's role is to ask for social justice."

The leader of Latin America's last cold war outpost, Cuba's Fidel Castro, lost a chance to exchange messages with the Pontiff by radio when the Papal aircraft changed course in midflight and did not overfly Cuba as planned.

Cuba is the only major Latin American country the Pope has not visited.

Paraguay plane crash toll reaches 24

ASUNCION (R) — A 5-year-old boy pulled from the wreckage of a Colombian cargo plane that ploughed into homes near Paraguay's capital died Monday, raising the death toll of Sunday's crash to 24, police said.

Luis Cesar Brignardello had been rescued from beneath the wreckage by his 10-year-old brother, but died in a clinic early Monday of severe third-degree burns, said police.

The DC-8 aircraft of Colombia's Lineas Aereas Del Caribe crashed Sunday afternoon one minute after takeoff into a poor neighbourhood 17 kilometres northeast of Asuncion.

Most of the victims were children playing an outdoor volleyball match and friends and relatives who were watching.

Eleven of the dead were from a single family. A grandmother, her children and grandchildren all died, leaving alive only three family members who were elsewhere on the day of the disaster, local newspapers reported.

The aircraft's three crew members and

one passenger, all Colombian, were also killed.

The search through the wreckage resumed at dawn Monday after breaking off Sunday night. Rescue workers found several limbs but did not rule out finding more complete bodies under the rubble of houses and twisted wreckage.

Four teenagers were still listed as missing late Monday, and residents told police they had seen them in the area just before the crash. Two burned and completely unrecognizable bodies still had not been identified.

The cause of the crash was still unknown, but witnesses said they saw one of the plane's engines explode. Efforts to establish the cause were being hampered by the apparent theft of the black box flight recorder.

Onlookers crowded the site immediately after the crash, getting in the way of inexperienced rescue workers and ambulances. One souvenir-hunter was seen making off with bits of destroyed fuselage.

The plane had stopped at Asuncion en route to Brazil.

2 killed in Bangladesh pre-poll violence

DHAKA (R) — Two people have been shot dead and nearly 50 wounded in clashes ahead of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia's planned election tour of Bangladesh's southern districts, police said Tuesday.

They said Mohammad Nasiruddin died when opposition Awami League activists attacked a rally held by the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) in the southern town of Feni Monday.

The BNP was urging Feni residents to give Mrs. Khaleda a warm welcome when she arrived Wednesday. The rally was dispersed when the Awami activists struck, detonating bombs and firing guns.

The Awami League, which with other major opposition parties is boycotting elections on Feb. 15, said Nasiruddin was one of its leading

activists in Feni, a seat Mrs. Khaleda is standing for in the poll.

A police officer in Feni told Reuters that violence could worsen Tuesday and Wednesday.

The prime minister will contest the polls in four other districts. The constitution allows one individual to stand in up to five seats, although a successful candidate is permitted to hold only one seat.

Separately, a BNP student leader, Feroze Hossain Musa, was found shot dead in Chittagong port city Monday after he was abducted by unidentified gunmen.

Police said Musa's killing was probably the result of election rivalries. The BNP blamed Awami activists for his death.

In Chittagong, bombs were hurled Monday at the home of L.K. Siddiqui, a BNP candi-

date in the polls, police said. No one was wounded.

But more than 30 people were hurt in fighting between BNP and opposition militants near Cox's Bazar resort Monday.

Police said the clash was a sequel to violence Saturday when at least 20 people were hurt.

Mrs. Khaleda's BNP is the only major party taking part in the election. The opposition has demanded that Khaleda resign and transfer power to a neutral caretaker administration before the polls.

But Mrs. Khaleda, elected in 1991 in what were billed as Bangladesh's first free elections, has rejected the demand as unconstitutional. Opposition parties have called for a general strike in Feni Wednesday to disrupt Khaleda's campaign visit. They have also called for countryside strikes on Feb. 14 and on election day.

Camilla's ex-husband to remarry

LONDON (AFP) — The former husband of Camilla Parker-Bowles, the intimate friend of Prince Charles, is to remarry, the British press reported Tuesday. Andrew Parker-Bowles, 55, is to marry Rosemary Pitman, a divorcee of the same age and long-standing friend. The couple have lived together since July. The Parker-Bowles divorced, by mutual consent, last year after living apart since 1993 and following Prince Charles' admission of his relationship with Camilla.

Thieves steal fire rescue truck in Miami

MIAMI (R) — Thieves made off with a city fire department rescue truck while it was parked outside an apartment waiting to take an elderly man to the hospital, officials said. "We came down with the patient and there was no truck," said fire Lt. Joe Cabrera. "We were in shock. We couldn't believe it." A second Miami fire rescue truck was sent to pick up the patient, who was suffering chest pains. The truck — still flashing its emergency lights — was recovered a few minutes later in a parking lot after a neighbour called police and said he saw three men taking things out of it.

U.S. military MREs dubbed meals ready to explode

TUZLA AIR BASE (R) — The American military's packaged ready-to-eat rations known as MREs have picked up a new name — meals ready to explode. Some bored servicemen have used the heating element of the nutritionally complete but "unappealing" meals ready to eat to make homemade explosives, several soldiers said Monday. The package, which includes one of twelve varieties of main dishes including barbecued pork and rice, and tuna casserole, also contains an ingenious heating element which uses a sodium chloride mixture to boil water in a bag to heat the meal.

Audience to get refund if musical off key

LONDON (R) — The producer of a London musical about a travelling executioner, which has been panned by British critics, is offering theatregoers their money back in the interval if they do not enjoy the show. "The Fields of Ambrosia", set in the American deep south in 1918, tells the story of Jonas Candide, who ferries his electric chair from execution to execution but falls in love with a German woman he is due to put to death. British critics have labelled it "doomed" and "preposterous" and said it is in bad taste. During the next two weeks audiences can claim a full refund in the interval if they want to leave.

Rio governor urges slum-dwellers to charge Jackson

RIO DE JANEIRO (R) — The governor of Rio de Janeiro state said he would not block superstar Michael Jackson from shooting a video in a shantytown but he urged slum dwellers to charge for the privilege, a newspaper reported. "If the local residents' association wants to (charge), I'll even give them legal assistance," Marcello Alencar told daily O Globo. "The community could use that money to invest in projects in the (slum)." U.S. film director Spike Lee plans to film Jackson in Rio's Dona Marta shantytown.

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Europe shivers under a blanket of snow

LONDON (R) — From Britain to Yugoslavia, Europe shivered under a thick blanket of snow Tuesday as freezing temperatures brought chaos to much of the continent.

As transport systems clattered to a halt and emergency services moved into overdrive, forecasters warned the arctic snap was likely to continue in several areas.

Blizzards trapped over 1,000 drivers in their cars overnight in southern Scotland and brought down power lines across Britain, leaving more than 25,000 homes without electricity.

Snow drifted up to two metres deep in places and one motoring organisation described conditions as a "whitemare".

Danish government ice-breakers went into action for the first time in nearly a decade to clear channels between Jutland and the islands of Funen and Zealand, where the capital Copenhagen is situated.

Another icebreaker was sent in the Oresund Channel between Zealand and Sweden, where drifting ice has disrupted high-speed ferries between Copenhagen and the Swedish port of Malmö.

Temperatures in Denmark have hit lows of minus 15 Celsius (five degrees Fahrenheit) while the Swedish capital Stockholm has seen minus 30 degrees Celsius (minus 22 Fahrenheit).

In France, snow blanketed the northwest regions of Brittany and Normandy, paralysing numerous roads and prompting authorities to close schools in several areas.

Police said more than a foot of snow (30 cms) fell in some places in what seemed to be the heaviest snowfalls in the region in a decade. Rare snow also fell in southern France, covering the ancient town of Nîmes, the site of a Roman amphitheatre.

German newspapers said the country was experiencing its coldest winter since 1986-87. The River Elbe in eastern Germany has frozen over, bringing barge traffic to a standstill.

Overnight temperatures in the southern province of Bavaria were expected to fall to minus 20 degrees Celsius (minus four Fahrenheit). Firefighters told people in north and east Germany to fill their bathtubs with water in case pipes froze.

Rough seas, heavy snowfalls and blizzards closed Romania's Black Sea port of Constanta and disrupted River Danube traffic, transport officials said.

Belgrade (the "white city") lived up to its name, lying under more than 50 cm (18 inches) of snow which have severely disrupted traffic and services throughout the capital.

The city airport reopened Tuesday morning after shutting down Monday in a snowstorm. Most roads in Serbia were open but traffic was proceeding with great difficulty, the Yugoslav Motor Association said.

The Vienna daily newspaper Neue Kronen Zeitung reported 33 days of snowfall so far this winter in the Austrian capital and said council trucks had cleared more than 200,000 cubic metres from the streets — 100 times more than during last year.

To the south, Portugal was experiencing one of its wettest winters for years with rainfall in many places triple the norm. Floods have killed at least 12 people and made more than 1,000 homeless over the past six weeks, officials said.

Southern Spain, in the grip of a drought for several years that drained reservoirs, has seen almost continuous rain since December which has ruined crops and flooded homes.

Ireland's Air-Sea Rescue Service resumed a search Tuesday for two fishermen missing when their trawler sank off the east coast this week in heavy storms. The body of a third crewman was recovered earlier this week.

But the wintry conditions were good news for some. Police in central England arrested a man for stealing a wheelbarrow after following its tracks through the snow to his home.



Iceicles hang from an orange in a Florida grove, as bitterly cold Arctic weather headed south, leaving orange trees covered with ice and tourists shivering on beaches. Central Florida farmers tried to protect their crops by using water to de-ice the fruit and protect them from the low temperatures (Reuters photo)

Tourists shiver, oranges freeze as storm hits Florida

TAMPA, Fla. (R) — Bitterly cold Arctic weather that numbed the eastern two-thirds of the United States headed south to Florida Monday, leaving orange trees covered with ice and tourists shivering on beaches.

Temperatures fell below freezing in central Florida, damaging some of the state's annual \$1.2 billion citrus crop. A record low of 19 degrees Fahrenheit (minus 7 degrees Celsius) was reported in Jacksonville and in Florida's northern panhandle the wind chill took the mercury to minus three degrees (minus 20 degrees C) in Panama City, forecasters said.

"There is ice in the fruit, defoliation of the trees, and damage to new growth," said a spokeswoman for the Florida Citrus Mutual Growers' Cooperative.

"That means trouble not only for this year's crop but next year's too."

Florida orange, strawberry and vegetable growers who spent the weekend rushing to pick their fruit said it would take several days to determine the amount of damage.

Officials said the freeze was not as bad as 1989 when the state's citrus and winter vegetable crops were severely damaged.

Tourists who flocked to Florida to bask in the sun found themselves huddled up in heavy coats, hats and gloves. Miami Beach Hotel guests awakened to palm trees bending under gusting winds but a few hardy holidaymakers endured a walk on sunny beaches normally crowded with swimmers.

The only sun-seekers who put on bathing suits were a trio of models on a magazine photo session, hopping with the cold and grabbing heavy towels for warmth between shots.

"You can't feel your toes," said model Tatiana Engelhardt. "You have to dress and undress... And it's cold out here."

But even the coldest Florida weather was mild compared to the farm belt where dozens of deaths have been blamed on last month's record-breaking blizzard and an Arctic blast that dumped snow, ice and sleet from Minnesota south to Louisiana last week.

In some rural areas of Minnesota, temperatures plunged to minus 50 degrees (minus 58C) at the weekend.

Emergency workers blamed the storm for 11 deaths in North and South Carolina, 10 in Illinois, four in Mississippi, three in Alabama and one each in Georgia and Pennsylvania.

Hampshire Republicans said in the New York Post poll that they thought Mr. Clinton deserved re-election.

Most analysts do not believe Mr. Forbes can beat Sen. Dole in the long haul but they say his campaign has exposed what could be some deadly weaknesses for Sen. Dole.

Taiwan seeks to calm war of words with China

TAIPEI (AFP) — Taiwan Tuesday sought to calm its war of words with Beijing after another day of jitters over China's reported plans to hold large-scale military exercises on the Nationalist island's doorstep.

Shunning his usual criticism of China for fueling the tensions in the Taiwan Strait, Taiwanese President Lee Teng-hui seized the occasion of the earthquake disaster in the southwestern Chinese province of Yunnan in sound a conciliatory note.

"There was a big earthquake in Yunnan and serious casualties," Mr. Lee said while inaugurating his campaign office in Miaoli, south of Taipei. "This is the time for all of us here to exercise our love for our compatriots and to help the people there."

"We are all Chinese people. We should help each other," he said, adding that the "love for our compatriots is not changed by any differences in political ideologies."

He insisted that the removal of Taiwan's state of emergency on May 1, 1991, easing hostilities with China, reflected the government's efforts to improve relations with the mainland.

But China was in no mood for compromise with the island it regards as a renegade province that will one day return to the mainland's control.

In a scathing attack published by Xinhua, Beijing accused Mr. Lee of plotting since his student days of creating an independent Taiwan.

"Lee Teng-hui hid his intention for advocacy of the 'independence of Taiwan'," he worked for the Kuomintang for a long time until rising to the 'peak' of power in Taiwan," the 1,000-word commentary alleged.

Although China has published said the polls are of no significance to Taiwan's status, the attack on Mr. Lee, who is the odds-on favourite to become the island's first democratically elected president, revealed deep fears from Beijing over the island's destiny.

Mr. Peng and Mr. Lee "both violate the fundamental interests of the Chinese nation, including those of the people from Taiwan," the article said.

The Taiwan Bourse fell further Tuesday as nerves mounted over tension with China.

Share prices lost 1.5 per cent, with Taiwan's weighted price index closing at 4,690.22 points, down 69.03.

In a bid to calm people here and boost their confidence in the government, the Defence Ministry has held two days of military exercises in Hualien, eastern Taiwan.

The Taiwan Defence Ministry also said it had detected no unusual troop movements but added Nationalist troops would remain on the alert during the Lunar New Year, which this year falls on Feb. 19. It also appealed for public calm.

Washington, meanwhile, was urging Asian governments to "do everything necessary" to calm tension between Beijing and Taipei.



Taiwanese soldiers load up missiles during a military exercise held by the defense ministry off the coast of the eastern county of Hualien Tuesday. The ministry said the exercise was routine and was not related to recent tensions between Taiwan and China (Reuters photo)

It said Mr. Lee formed an "iron triangle" with two pro-independence activists, Peng Ming-min and Liu Ching-hui, and that he secretly kept in contact with his "super-aide" Mr. Peng during the latter's exile in the United States.

Mr. Peng is a candidate running against Mr. Lee in Taiwan's March 23 presidential elections, a vote widely seen as a watershed in the island's history.

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S. Korea's Kim rallies party on anti-graft platform

SEOUL (R) — South Korean President Kim Young-Sam Tuesday set out an election platform for his ruling party that vows to end corruption, stamp out "rotten politics" and ensure the military never again grabs power.

Addressing 12,000 cheering supporters, Mr. Kim appealed for a clear mandate for his revamped and renamed New Korea Party in general elections in April.

The stark choice for voters, he told party faithful packed into a Seoul sports stadium for a national convention, is "stability or confusion".

"We have to put an end to rotten politics. The practice of buying and selling seats in the National Assembly must be terminated once and for all," he said.

The platform draws on Mr. Kim's growing stature as an anti-graft campaigner following the arrest and detention of two former presidents, Chun Doo-hwan and Roh Tae-woo, on corruption and other charges.

Mr. Kim is hoping his party will cruise to victory on a national wave of revulsion against the corrupt excesses of his military-backed predecessors.

"The fact that two former presidents are under arrest is a national misfortune and disgrace," he said.

"Grabbing power through a coup d'etat and amassing a fortune by abusing power, however, should never be allowed to happen again in this land."

The rally rolled out what will become the party's rallying slogan in the first elections to the National Assembly under a civilian president: "Reform within stability".

It is a slogan that addresses a popular desire for clean government while nodding in anxieties that political turmoil could threaten economic growth.

"Social stability without reform is stagnation; reform without stability is chaos," Mr. Kim said to thunderous applause from his audience, many of them holding aloft colourful plastic batons and waving national flags.

Mr. Kim said a vote against the ruling party could be a vote for the kind of street violence, demonstrations and labour unrest that engulfed the country in the late 1980s when the opposition held a parliamentary majority.

At that time Mr. Kim was an opposition leader.

"Without securing a comfortable majority in the National Assembly we will no longer be able to carry out changes and reforms," he said.

The convention included a raucous stage show featuring everything from a dark-suited crooner to young pop stars.

Its upbeat mood contrasted with national gloom following the arrest of Mr. Chun and Mr. Roh and revelations that the former generals skimmed hundreds of millions of dollars from business tycoons while in office.

The elections are widely seen as a bellwether for next year's presidential vote.

Mr. Kim is constitutionally barred from seeking a second term, but he must keep his parliamentary majority to avoid becoming a lame duck in South Korea's U.S.-style presidential system.

Crushed in local elections last June, the ruling party had been widely seen heading for another drubbing before Kim launched his anti-graft drive.

Last December the party changed its name to signal a break from its ties to a political machine built by Mr. Chun and Mr. Roh. The party was created through a 1990 merger between two opposition groups, one led by Mr. Kim, and Mr. Roh's ruling camp.

Yet its past has returned to haunt the party with allegations last week by Mr. Chun that he paid the equivalent of about \$125 million to politicians and journalists since 1990 to prepare a political comeback.

Mr. Chun still has influential loyalists within the ruling camp and their integrity is now being called into question.

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Nigeria-Cameroon border clashes claims 4 lives

LAGOS (AFP) — Four people died and 13 were injured in clashes between Nigerian and Cameroonian forces, the Nigerian press reported Tuesday, citing military sources.

Reports said two Nigerian soldiers were killed and two injured in clashes in the disputed Bakassi peninsula area Saturday.

Two civilians were also reported killed, 11 others injured and two Cameroonian police officers taken prisoner. There was no official confirmation of the reports.

College poll, Mr. Forbes led Sen. Dole 29 per cent to 25 per cent.

In a New York Post poll, Mr. Forbes led Sen. Dole 23.5 per cent to 22.1 per cent. A daily tracking poll by the American Research Group had Sen. Dole's support stabilising at 25 per cent with Mr. Forbes leveling out at 18 per cent. Conservative columnist Pat Buchanan seemed to be moving up and was now tied with Mr. Forbes.

Mr. Buchanan is one of the three Republicans on the ballot in Louisiana, along with Texas Senator Phil Gramm and conservative talk show host Alan Keyes, and could receive some additional media attention if he wins there.

One difficulty with polling in New Hampshire is that independents are allowed to vote in the Republican primary, but no one knows how many actually will. Polls that include a larger number of independents in the sample tend to show Mr. Forbes leading Sen. Dole.

In Iowa the problem is trying to gauge how many people will show up on what will likely be a frigid night to vote at the 2,143 local caucus meetings.

The Republican scrap is good news for Mr. Clinton, who is the first Democratic president since the 1930s to be opposed for his party's nomination. While the Republicans rip each other apart Mr. Clinton has floated above the fray, looking presidential.

Dole fights to keep Republican campaign lead

WASHINGTON (R) — With the first votes of the 1996 presidential campaign about to be cast, Senate majority leader Bob Dole is struggling to stay ahead of his Republican rivals amid doubts any of them can beat President Bill Clinton.

Republicans in Louisiana can vote Tuesday in caucuses for their presidential candidate to face Mr. Clinton next November. But only three of the nine candidates are on the ballot so the outcome should not be of great significance.

The first real test will come next Monday in Iowa, to be followed eight days later by the New Hampshire primary. Polling data is confusing from both states but suggests Sen. Dole is neck-and-neck with millionaire publisher Steve Forbes, who has surged in the past two weeks but may be peaking.

"The data is difficult but it is clear Sen. Dole has lost ground in both Iowa and New Hampshire, reflecting a lack of enthusiasm for him among Republicans," said Karlyn Keene, who studies polls for the American Enterprise Institute.

In three polls in New Hampshire released Monday Mr. Forbes was narrowly ahead of Sen. Dole in two and behind in a third. In a Dartmouth

College poll, Mr. Forbes led Sen. Dole 29 per cent to 25 per cent.

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Aftershocks hamper relief after deadly China quake

BEIJING (R) — More than 1,000 aftershocks have rattled southwest China's Lijiang region since a killer weekend earthquake, hampering relief work as the number of shattered homes soared to 330,000, officials said Tuesday.

Braving a rare cold snap, many of the hundreds of thousands of people left homeless by Saturday's 7.0-magnitude earthquake huddled in terror outdoors rather than enter damaged houses as the earth continued to shake, they said.

The death toll has climbed to 246 with 15,000 injured, 3,837 of them seriously, said rescue coordinators reached by telephone Tuesday in the Yunnan provincial capital, Kunming.

"The earth is still shaking and we are really scared," a newspaper reporter in Lijiang said by telephone.

He said he had entered the building to fetch something he needed outside when he heard the telephone. "We prefer to work outside."

More than 3,000 troops and armed police were sent from neighbouring Sichuan province to help 2,000 soldiers scouring the rubble of mud-brick homes for any more dead, officials said.

The tally of collapsed homes had surpassed 330,000. Entire villages were obliterated. Warm clothing, shelter and medicine were in desperately short supply, officials said.

"There aren't enough tents and some people just sleep on pieces of wood," the reporter said. "It is really cold, especially at four or five o'clock in the morning."

Relief supplies from China and overseas had begun pouring into the mountainous region of

Yunnan province, accessible from Kunming only by small aircraft or over rutted, twisting roads.

Beijing pledged 20 million yuan (\$2.4 million) in new state emergency aid as well as 5,000 tonnes of fuel, 100,000 padded garments and hundreds of tents, the Xinhua News Agency said.

Some 80 million yuan (\$9.6 million) in aid was delivered Monday, including cash and material donations from Taiwan, Hong Kong and Japan as well as Chinese agencies, firms and individuals.

Top priority was airlifting clothing, quilts, medicine and tents to Lijiang, a region 2,000 kilometres southwest of Beijing and known for its scenic beauty, with ethnic Naxi villages nestled below snow-capped Jade Dragon Snow Mountain.

More assistance was

needed despite a good initial response to Sunday's Red Cross of China appeal, officials said.

"We are now asking for donations of clothing and quilts," a Yunnan provincial official said from Kunming.

None of the 1,000 aftershocks recorded by late Tuesday registered more than the 6.0-magnitude shock that jolted residents in Monday's early-morning darkness, officials said.

The main tremor Saturday was the worst in Lijiang since the 15th century and China's deadliest in eight years.

An American tourist who was injured at Tiger Leaping Gorge on the Yangtze River was "not in danger of dying" and taken with 21 fellow foreign travellers to a safe area. Four others had slight injuries, an official in Kunming said.

Voices from the 'loony bin' demystify madness

By Gary Regenstein

REUTERS
BUENOS AIRES — They have a correspondent on Mars, one who dispatches news from "above heaven" and yet another who dubs himself the emperor of paranoia.

No, this is no ordinary radio broadcast transmitted from behind the faded pink walls of Borda Hospital in Buenos Aires.

This is "loony radio." In one of Argentina's largest psychiatric wards, patients have been producing their own radio programme for five years as therapy, and to help demystify madness to those outside.

Radio La Colifata, loony radio in Argentine slang, is taped Saturdays and broadcast to Borda's 1,300 patients. Extracts are played by a dozen mainstream radio stations.

"The insane are rejected and marginalised by society. This puts a human voice on people who in jail fear in the community," said Alfredo Olivera, the 29-year-old founder and coordinator of the programme. "It is a link between the inside and outside. We want to break the stigma and this helps them feel less excluded from society."

Participating patients, most of whom are psychotic, wander in and out of delirium but, in more lucid moments, touchingly express their anguish, their needs and their hopes.

On a recent Saturday, about 15 patients congregated around an old wood-

en table with rudimentary broadcast equipment in a courtyard of the institution that becomes a makeshift studio.

One by one, they introduce themselves. Ever, a Bolivian Indian, reports from "above heaven" but when he descends from his deliriant he comments on more earthly issues punctuated with words in his native Quechua tongue.

Garces, who dabbles in homepun philosophy, invented the radio's name and describes himself as the "emperor of paranoia" because "I am more schizophrenic than everyone."

Ramon Arturo summons memories of battle in the Falklands war against Britain, but also recites folklore and informs a visitor he won the Nobel Prize some years ago.

Alfred, given the nickname, will only sing.

Angel is the creator of the Borda tango club. On Mars, the correspondent there reports, there is only love. But on earth, he says, there is only war, hunger, cold, sadness and pain.

There is a romantic segment of the show in which patients sing ballads, followed by the news when they read and debate newspaper headlines, and interview each other.

One laments his family has stopped visiting him. "You are not alone," another reassures him. "You have 1,300 family members here."

During the two-hour programme they will smoke

frantically. Some wander away and then drift back again.

One Colifata success story is Adolfo, a patient who was accredited to cover Boca Juniors soccer club on Sundays. He was discharged but continued to cover matches. Now he has stopped coming because he no longer needs Borda as a crutch.

"It's a way to leap across the wall," said Mickey, one patient who actively participates. "It's a link to society."

Mr. Olivera arrived at Borda in 1990 as a 24-year-old psychology student in volunteer his time.

"I arrived with fear and expectation. I was moved, overwhelmed by the state of abandonment," he said. "These people instil fear in people. In me they produced tenderness."

The radio idea came a year later when a station asked him to field public questions about Borda. He thought there was no one better than the patients to articulate their concerns.

That led to a regular weekly Borda column. The Panamerican Health Organisation recognised it as the first radio in the world to broadcast from a psychiatric hospital.

Many stations that rebroadcast the programme are community outlets, but some are top-rated commercial channels.

The hospital is indifferent, Mr. Olivera said, not obstructing the show but not helping. He brings the equipment by bus every Saturday with his wife, psy-

chologist Maria Celia Vieira. One radio station donated an antenna and others compact discs.

"It's a marvellous project," said Mariana Mauna, executive producer on an Am del Plata show that with a million listeners is one of Argentina's top-rated slots, and which uses the Colifata reports. "It's heartbreaking."

"These are human beings and this helps them to feel not like animals. They have things to say which are not so crazy. They say things or ask questions we wouldn't dare say or ask."

Ms. Mauna is at a loss to explain radio La Colifata's success with the public. "The question is whether they feel sorry for them or identify with some of the things they are saying."

"If family and friends don't come," another Colifata commentator counsels his fellow patients, "it's not because they can't come but because they don't want to, not for lack of time or opportunity but because of lack of interest."

"I feel alone in the inside of my body," muses Mickey, in a broadcast whose rambling style belies an anguished determination to return to the world outside.

"Enough of sorrow, try to live a phase of joy and happiness, try to get my house, make a couple and once and for all be a new trouble-free person, start from zero so things go well, leave behind the past or I will never triumph in life. These are difficult moments but I must overcome them."

Muslim refugees in Serbia fear to go home

By Jovan Kovacic

REUTERS
SLJIVOVICA, Yugoslavia — Peace in Bosnia has brought with it new fears for hundreds of Muslim men who fled eastern Bosnia last year and sought refuge among Serbs.

The men, living under U.N. protection in a rough camp at Sljivovica in western Serbia near the Bosnian border, are frightened to go home.

Survivors of the Bosnian Serb offensives that overran the former U.N. "safe areas" of Srebrenica and Zepa last year, the group fears prosecution by the Muslim-led Bosnian government army for desertion.

They want Western European countries to give them asylum and are embittered by the reluctance to offer them refuge despite the efforts of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Bosnian army spokesman Ferid Buljusic denied the men could be jailed if they return and insisted they were covered by an amnesty expected to be passed through parliament soon.

But for the moment, the UNHCR accepts the men's concern and is appealing to the conscience of Western European governments already wrestling with the burdens of unemployment and budget deficits to take the men in.

Tina Andersen of the UNHCR in Belgrade said:

"Resettlement to third countries is the only option... These refugees risk persecution for desertion if they return. The amnesty was just a declaration. We cannot accept that — it must be followed by laws to inspire confidence."

So far 230 Sljivovica inmates have reached the west, 229 have been promised asylum but are waiting to leave and 337 cases are pending.

"I just want to go, I am desperate. All of us here have suffered terribly through 3-1/2 years of siege, and now we are left here to rot by the West," Sabirja Cesko said.

Ms. Cesko and the others fled Bosnian Serb assaults on Srebrenica and Zepa knowing they would almost certainly die if they were captured.

The International Committee of the Red Cross has acknowledged that 8,000 people from Srebrenica, mostly Muslim men, are missing. It said 3,000 were removed from Potocari prison camp while 5,000 others tried to break through Serb lines in the wooded mountains but never reached Bosnian government-held territory.

Most of the missing are feared dead and survivors alleged that thousands were killed in mass executions carried out by the Serbs in the days following the fall of the town.

The Bosnian Serbs sent women and children in buses from the enclaves to government-held Tuzla.

Samir Cocalic, a former officer in Zepa, said: "We had to head for Serbia because the way to (Muslim) Gorazde was blocked and it would have been sheer madness to risk the route through Bosnian Serb lines towards Tuzla."

His superiors escaped to Zenica and left his company as a decoy for Bosnian Serbs on the cliffs overlooking the fast and deep Drina River bordering Serbia.

"Most of my men had to jump and swim across. Some drowned in the strong current, but we made it," he said.

"Now I do not know whether back home they will treat me as a prisoner or deserter. But I know one thing — they deserted me and my men. Now that we have survived, I also worry what our commanders will do to prevent us from speaking out," he said.

He said the early days at the Sljivovica camp near Uzice, 200 km west of Belgrade, were not pleasant but that the situation improved within weeks.

Red Cross officials complained to the Yugoslav government about the behaviour of some guards and abuses were stopped.

The camp commander, who did not want to be identified, said armed guards patrolling the perimeter of the camp were warned they would be punished for any breach of discipline.

According to western diplomats in Belgrade, Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic refused demands by the Bosnian Serb army Commander General Ratko Mladic to return the Muslims.

The UNHCR is running this show, giving them three meals a day prepared by their own cook, hospital treatment and a postal and money transfer service," the commander said.

Inmate Edhem Bajic, interviewed out of earshot of camp authorities, said: "We have no problem with the guards. They are good to us. This is no hotel but we are fed, clean and warm. It is the uncertainty regarding our future that is driving us insane."

The camp commander said he was worried about the morale of the inmates which the UNHCR acknowledges is very poor. "They have had enough of being kept here and of promises they would be resettled in the East. Some have even threatened suicide if their problems are not solved quickly," he added.

"For the last four years I have not watched television, listened to the radio, have not been in a shop," one inmate said. "The war is over, the threat is gone, but I feel like I am still under siege."



DIRECT SUPERVISION: Her Royal Highness Princess Basma on Tuesday visits the town of Hisba outside Amman as part of a supervision and inspection drive over a charity drive she launched for the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development to help the needy in the beginning of the Holy Month of Ramadan (Petra photo)

Sudan defers presidential elections

AP — Sudan delayed elections for president and parliament Tuesday to allow more people time to enter the race.

The elections, Sudan's first since 1986, were to run from March 1 to March 13, but the elections committee said they would be postponed until March 6 "to give more chance for candidates to come up with their presidential election forms."

The elections will now end March 17, and results will be announced March 20, state-run radio said Tuesday. The deadline for submitting applications was moved from Tuesday to Saturday.

There were complaints to Sudanese newspapers that the March 1 date did not give enough time for campaigning or for organising the vote in a country with bad roads and poor communications.

Voters will elect a president and 275 members of the 400-seat parliament. The other members were chosen last month by the government-sponsored National Congress, which represents grass-roots groups throughout the country, Africa's largest.

Leutenant-General Omar Hassan Al Bashir, Sudan's military leader, is almost sure to win the presidential race. So far, he faces a handful of little-known candidates, including a swimmer, a southern Sudanese politician and two university lecturers.

One of the main opposition figures is former prime minister Sadeq Al Mahdi, who Gen. Bashir overthrew in a 1989 coup.

But Mr. Mahdi has said he will not enter the contest because he fears there will be vote-rigging and fraud and that security officials will harass his supporters.

The election is "only to better the image of the regime," he told an independent newspaper in Khartoum.

Southern rebels are also boycotting the vote. They have been battling since 1983 for more autonomy for Christians and adherents of tribal faiths in southern Sudan. More than 1.3 million people have died in the fighting and in famines caused by the war.

King to visit S. Arabia on Sunday

(Continued from page 1)

Royal Jordanian, the Kingdom's national flag carrier, is also seeking to resume flights to Kuwait soon.

Dr. Muasher said the King's meetings with the Saudi leaders were in line with Jordan's consistent policy of seeking excellent relations with all Arab countries, particularly the countries of Arab Gulf.

The very appointment of Mr. Kabarti as prime minister is seen partly owed to the success he scored as foreign minister in achieving breakthroughs in Jordan's efforts to settle differences with the

Gulf states.

The information minister said the King would also visit Egypt upon an invitation from President Hosni Mubarak. He did not set a date for the visit.

It was not immediately clear whether Mr. Mubarak's invitation to the King was to a tripartite summit reportedly proposed by Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, who is seeking wide Arab support and Jordanian and Egyptian backing in particular for the Palestinian strategy in "final status" negotiations with Israel on the future of the West Bank and Gaza Strip beginning in May.

Crown Prince urges interaction

(Continued from page 1)

problems among Jordanians across the country. Crimes, and crimes of honour in particular, their causes and dimensions, are not known to the public.

"Will the youth issues come to an end? The murder of a girl by her brother (is still occurring) at a time when we are about to enter the 21st century. What do we know about the lives of people and their suffering? What do we know about crimes?" the Crown Prince said. "There should be a nucleus for the exchange of information and knowledge."

"The absence of logic and philosophy from our curriculum should be examined if we want to expand the horizon of the inter-information revolution," the Crown Prince added at the meeting, which was also attended by university presidents and professors.

"We should be calling on universities and research centres to work as one team... there should be a qualitative leap in changing the social conduct," he said.

"We wish all the success for the new government in its efforts to bring change," he added.

Iraq, U.N. open oil talks

(Continued from page 1)

an interview with the Central Bank Governor Isam Hweish in which he predicted that sanctions were about to fizzle out.

"The end of the embargo is inevitable and is coming soon," Mr. Hweish told the paper.

Iraqis are also anxious but hopeful that the talks would result in an easing of the embargo.

Their optimism was fuelled by a spectacular recovery in the national currency's level against the dollar and a massive reduction in prices of food since Iraq announced on Jan. 19 that it was prepared to discuss the issue.

"Our hope is that these negotiations will put an end to our problems," said Ahmad Fares, a retired civil servant, summing up the feelings of many in the streets of Baghdad.

"I think these negotiations will end the all-embracing embargo," Fares, a father-of-five, added.

In the past few days the rate of the dinar against the dollar has fluctuated wildly, reflecting nervousness on the markets and in the government-controlled banks.

The dinar, which was trading at 3,000 to the dollar before Jan. 19, rose to 450 on Sunday before dropping to 650 on Monday and rising again to 550 against the greenback on Tuesday. It was valued at three to the dollar before the August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

"These changes are signs of an impending lifting of the embargo. The international situation is good at present," said Abu Salah, another optimist in the streets of the capital.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Egypt urges Sudan to hand over suspects

CAIRO (AP) — Egypt urged Sudan on Tuesday to turn over three men wanted in the assassination attempt on President Hosni Mubarak, saying it risked defying the international community. The U.N. Security Council last week urged Sudan to hand over the suspects, and the United States announced it was withdrawing all Americans from its embassy because of security concerns (see page 2). "Sudan should not defy international public opinion and the United Nations and deny the presence of any of those involved in its territories," Foreign Minister Amr Musa told reporters. "It must not ignore resolutions because these are dangerous matters. It is not in Egypt's interest that Sudan find itself in a worse situation that it already is in," Mr. Musa added. Soon after the June 26 attempt, Egypt accused Sudan of involvement, and relations soured badly. Sudan has denied a role and says it knows nothing about the whereabouts of the men.

WFP steps up aid to Afghanistan

ISLAMABAD (AP) — The World Food Programme (WFP) announced Tuesday that it will increase its food shipments to Afghanistan's devastated capital, where most people live in the ruins of a protracted civil war, shattered by daily rocket attacks and a bitterly cold winter. The increase means the WFP will be able to feed 250,000 of Kabul's poorest and hungriest, said Klaus Klavitter, WFP country director for Afghanistan. Runaway food prices and an unusually harsh winter prompted the WFP to increase the number of people eligible for its food aid, he said. As a result the WFP will be feeding nearly one-third of the city's total population of 750,000. Mr. Klavitter said the WFP has enough food in storage to carry it through the winter.

5,121 candidates for Iran's parliament elections

TEHRAN (R) — A total of 5,121 candidates have registered to run in elections on March 8 for Iran's 270-seat parliament, Tehran Radio said on Monday night. It said 914 candidates registered to run for 30 seats in the capital Tehran while 30 people are contesting four seats designated for non-Muslims. A spokesman for an opposition grouping told Reuters that 13 nationalist and liberal Islamic candidates had registered to run. They are mostly from the illegal but tolerated Freedom Movement and the National Front who had boycotted three earlier elections to protest against what they say is a lack of freedom to campaign.

One wounded in Shiite clashes in Lebanon

TYRE (AFP) — One person was wounded in clashes between rival Shiite Muslim groups in a village of South Lebanon near Israel's self-declared "security zone," police said Tuesday. They said Syrian-backed Amal and Iranian-backed Hizbollah fighters traded mortar, anti-tank rocket, and automatic weapons fire in Kafra late Monday until the Lebanese army and a joint committee intervened. A Hizbollah militiaman was wounded and a U.N. peacekeeper from the Nepalese contingent deployed in the area had a narrow escape with a bullet lodged in his back-jacket. It was the worst clash for more than a year between the two groups, both of which oppose Israel's occupation of the border zone.

Morocco bans berber culture show

RABAT (R) — Morocco's Human Rights Association (AMDH) on Monday denounced a government ban on a Berber cultural show and said this violated the constitution and basic principles of free speech. AMDH said the authorities gave no reason for banning the show last month by the independent Berber group, the Association Nouvelle pour la Culture et les Arts Populaires (ANCAP). "This decision violates the constitutional and basic principles of free speech. We denounced this behaviour which has occurred in the past," AMDH said. A spokesman for ANCAP said this was the fourth time the Interior Ministry had banned a public activity by the Berber group and noted that it had no political motive. Officials at the human rights ministry were not available for comment.



Jennifer Capriati

Capriati to return to tennis

PARIS (AP) — Jennifer Capriati will make her first tournament appearance since November 1994 at next week's Paris Open, organisers announced Monday.

Capriati was granted a wild card for the Feb. 13-18 event at the Court de la Ville. Capriati, 19, left the Tour after losing in the first round of the U.S. Open in 1993.

She returned to school, dropped out, and was arrested in the spring of 1994 for marijuana possession. A teen-ager arrested with her claimed she also had been using heroin, an allegation Capriati never denied.

Capriati went for treatment in two drug rehabilitation clinics, then attempted a comeback at a tournament in Philadelphia in November 1994. She lost in the first round to Anke Huber and has not played since.

"She feels ready physically and mentally after a long period of preparation in Florida," Paris Open organisers said in a statement.

Huber and former Australian Open champion Mary Pierce are the top entries in the Paris tournament. The 28-player field also includes Iva Majoli, Jana Novotna and Martina Hingis.

Steffi Graf was originally seeded No. 1 but had to withdraw last week because she is still recovering from foot surgery.

Capriati beat Graf to win the Olympic gold medal at the 1992 Barcelona Games. She was ranked No. 6 in the world in 1993, and reached the semifinals at the French Open in 1990, and Wimbledon and the U.S. Open in 1991.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Italian footballers threaten strike

ROME (AFP) — Sergio Campana president of the Italian professional footballers association threatened here on Monday that his members would strike on March 17. Juventus' former Italian international striker Gianluca Vialli said the players were fed up at not being consulted by their ruling body. "We are always the last to learn anything," its not democratic. We want to take part in the decisions being taken and to give our opinion on the matters being discussed."

McCarthy to be named Ireland manager

DUBLIN (AP) — Former Ireland international Mick McCarthy, manager of first-division English team Millwall, is the choice to succeed Jack Charlton as manager of Ireland's national team. McCarthy, who was Irish captain under Charlton, was to be officially named Monday by the Irish Football Association, just two days before his 37th birthday. Charlton resigned after almost 10 years on the job following a 2-0 loss in December against the Netherlands that eliminated Ireland from June's European Championships in England. McCarthy had 57 international appearances with Ireland and captained the team to the quarterfinals of the 1990 World Cup in Italy. Like Charlton, McCarthy was born in Northern England, and like many players on Ireland's national side, he qualified to play through parentage. McCarthy's first game in charge of Ireland will be a home exhibition next month against Russia.

Villeneuve crashes in testing

ESTORIL, Portugal (AFP) — Williams Renault's new driver Canadian Jacques Villeneuve crashed during testing here on Monday. The Canadian, 1995 Indy Car champion, had completed just three laps when he crashed. The crash damaged the nose cone of the car and the side wing deflators. Villeneuve said: "I went through a puddle and lost control. It was my fault. The Canadian, son of the late legendary Ferrari driver Gilles Villeneuve, was signed by boss Frank Williams during the 1995 season to replace Scotsman David Coulthard, now with McLaren.

Ceron to defend London marathon title

LONDON (R) — Dionicio Ceron on Mexico and Poland's Malgorzata Sobanska will defend their London marathon titles on April 21 against a record entry of 39,000 runners, the organisers said on Tuesday. Ceron, world championship silver medallist last year, is going for a hat-trick after becoming the first man to win the event twice with his second successive victory last year in the second fastest time ever recorded over the London course. Sobanska won the women's title last year by just 10 seconds from Manuela Machado of Portugal in the closest ever finish to the event.

Bremen, De Mos finally part company

BREMEN (R) — Aard de Mos finally parted company with Werder Bremen on Monday when he and the Bundesliga side that sacked him last month agreed a financial settlement that ended a running courtroom battle, legal sources said. Officials would not reveal details of the settlement reached during a closed-door hearing at Bremen's labour court. "Both parties knew how far apart we were. Today we took the final step," the Dutchman's lawyer, Mathias Prinz, told reporters without giving away any figures. Prinz had originally said he would try to have De Mos reinstated. De Mos's woes at Bremen — languishing in 15th place at the season's half-way mark after finishing second last season — began after Der Spiegel magazine said he had told a Belgian journalist that Bremen would never achieve anything.

Erhardt is Jets' offensive coordinator

NEW YORK (R) — Ron Erhardt, the former Pittsburgh Steelers' offensive coordinator, was hired on Monday for the same job with the New York Jets. The Jets also named another former Steelers' coach, Pat Hodgson, as tight ends coach. Erhardt said last Thursday the Steelers had not offered him a new contract, despite guiding an offence that scored an AFC-high 407 points last season. Jets head coach Rich Kotite was the offensive coordinator last season, but decided to relinquish the offensive duties for a team that ranked last in the NFL in total offence.

Branco to join Juninho at Middlesbrough

LONDON (AP) — Brazilian star Branco arrived in England on Monday to join his countryman Juninho at Premier League club Middlesbrough.

"Juninho is very happy here and said he would like me to come and play with him," the World Cup defender said. "We've played together before in the national squad and we are good

friends. That is the main reason why I settled on Middlesbrough."

"I had a few offers from other English clubs and also from teams in Japan, America and Spain. But I decided I wanted to play with Juninho."

Branco said the standard of play in England had also influenced his decision.

"I wanted to come here because England has one of the best leagues in the world," he said. "So I am very excited about it."

Branco spoke after arriving at Heathrow Airport with wife, Stella, before heading directly to Middlesbrough.

Middlesbrough has lost six straight league games, including a 5-0 hammering by

Chelsea on Saturday.

Manager Bryan Robson is looking to shore up his injury-hit club. Juninho has missed two consecutive games with a knee injury.

The 31-year-old Branco would not cost a fee, having bought out his contract at Brazilian club Internacional. But Robson admitted a large salary demand might cause

problems.

Robson's fortunes at Middlesbrough began to sour last month at about the same time he was mentioned as the favorite to succeed Terry Venables as England coach.

"I'm fed up with saying it, but I've not even been offered the job and even if I was it is the wrong time for me," Robson said.

Blazers beat Toronto in final 10th of a second

TORONTO (R) — Portland guard James Robinson fired in a three-pointer with one-tenth of a second left in the game to give the Trail Blazers a 90-87 victory over the Toronto Raptors Monday.

Toronto rookie Damon Stoudamire had tied the game at 87-87 with a layup with 23 seconds to go before Rod Strickland, penetrated the lane, then kicked it out to an open Robinson at the top of the arc for the game-winner.

"It feels pretty good. It's my second one," said Robinson, who also hit the deciding basket in a 109-108 win over the Lakers on Nov. 21. "The first one in L.A. was at the buzzer, but this was also very exciting."

"We anticipated him taking a shot. We just broke down defensively on that play," Toronto coach Brendan Malone said. "We didn't want an open shot like that to occur."

"We let them hang around, that's why we lost. They went to Rod Strickland and he proved why he is one of the best one-on-one players in the game."

Strickland scored 28 points and Clifford Robinson added 25 for Portland, which had lost 11 of its last 16 road contests. The Blazers have won two in a row after dropping five of six.

Toronto led by as many as nine points midway through the fourth quarter before Portland went on a 13-3 run, and the lead went back and forth until Stoudamire's basket.

"We hung in there, which was good," Portland coach P.J. Carlesimo said. "For a lot of this game, we were scoring just to stay within six or eight points. But at the end we finally put in a good defensive stretch to stop them."

"I thought Rod was exceptional tonight. He made a good decision," on the final play.

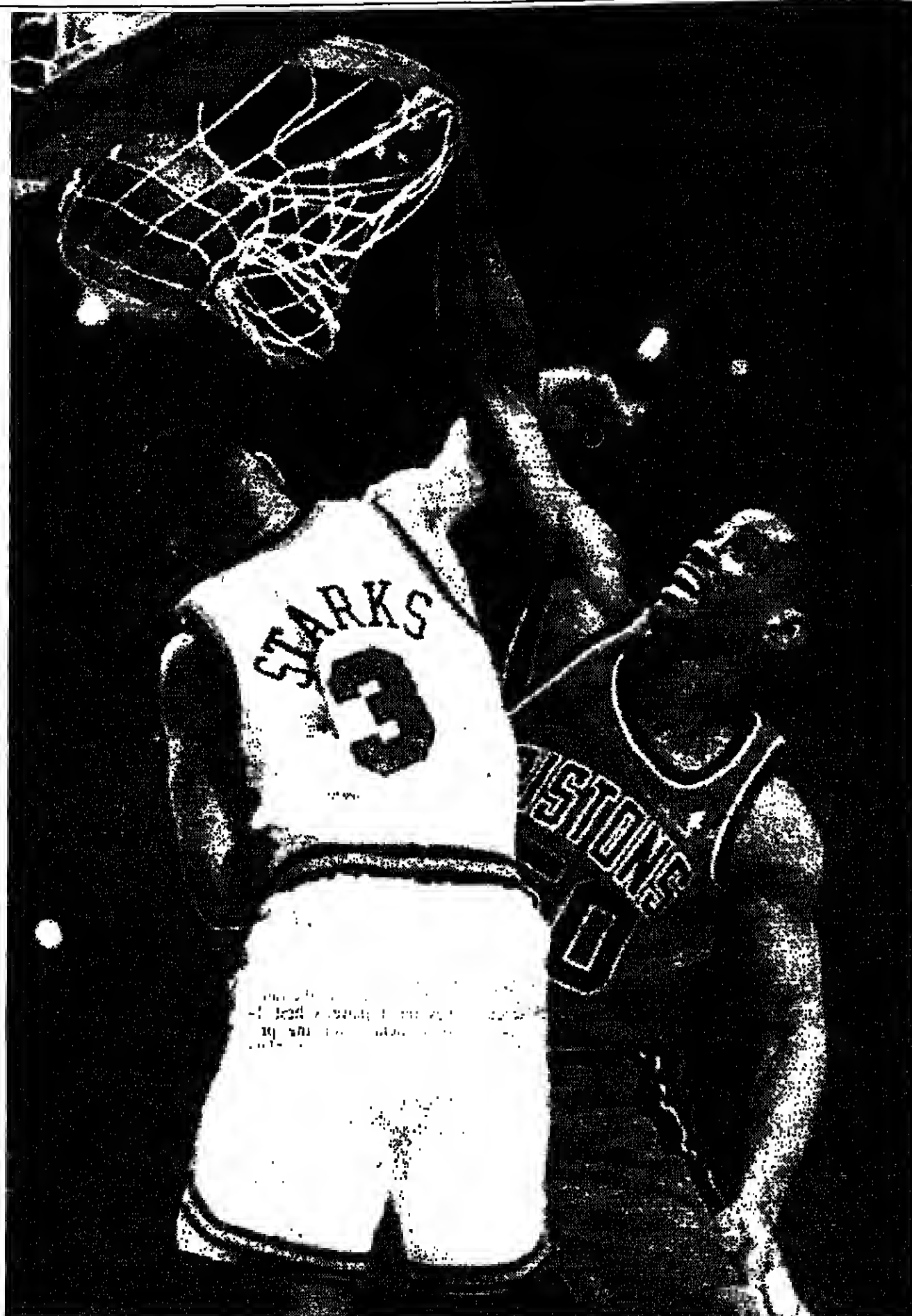
Former Blazer Tracy Murray and Stoudamire each netted 16 points for Toronto, which has lost five of its last six games.

"We're getting into a pattern of losing close games and we've got to try to break that," Stoudamire said.

In New York, Patrick Ewing scored 25 points to lift the Knicks past the Detroit Pistons 97-91 for their fifth win in six games.

Hubert Davis added 15 points and Derek Harper 14 for New York, which had five players score in double figures. The Knicks are 3-0 against the Pistons this season and have yet to trail in any of the games.

Ewing, the Knicks' all-time



Detroit Pistons' forward Otis Thorpe (right) stuffs the ball over New York Knicks' guard John Starks in the first

period of their NBA game at New York's Madison Square Garden (Reuters photo)

leading scorer, passed 19,000 career points with a basket in the first quarter.

Allan Houston led Detroit, with 24 points and Don Reid added 13 for the Pistons, who have dropped five straight to New York and eight in a row at Madison Square Garden.

In Miami, Alonzo Mourning had 25 points and 11 rebounds and Rex Chapman added 24 points to lead the Heat to a 103-92 victory over the Sacramento Kings.

Kevin Willis pulled down 14 rebounds for Miami, which had lost three of its last four games.

Mitch Richmond scored 18 points and Olden Polynice had 15 seven rebounds for the Kings.

Kevin Willis pulled down 14 rebounds for Miami, which had lost three of its last four games.

which had lost three of its last four games.

Bimbo Coles chipped in 20 points and six assists for Miami, which held a 49-37 rebounding edge.

At Minnesota, Tom Gugliotta scored 11 of his 22 points in the fourth quarter and Sam Mitchell added 10 of his 20 in the period as the Timberwolves beat the Dallas Mavericks for the second time in three days, 104-92.

Christian Laettner scored 20 points and Isiah Rider added 21 for the Timberwolves, who have won all three meetings against the Mavericks this season.

Jason Kidd had 22 points and nine assists, Jim Jackson scored 21 points and George McCloud added 17 for Dallas, which was outscored 50-

24 in the paint and fell to 6-16 on the road.

In Vancouver, Karl Malone scored 31 points including two three-point plays in a 12-6 third-quarter run as the Utah Jazz defeated the Grizzlies 92-83 for their fifth win six games.

Jeff Hornacek added 18 for the Jazz, who won their first-ever meeting between the teams.

Byron Scott scored 19 points and Anthony Avent added 14 for expansion Van-

couver, which has lost five straight games and six of its last eight at home.

In Los Angeles, rookie Joe Smith had 25 points and 16 rebounds and tipped in a miss with 19 seconds left, giving the Golden State Warriors the lead for good in a 128-124 victory over the Clippers.

Latrell Sprewell added 24 points and Chris Gatling 20 off the bench for the Warriors, who have won three straight.

RESULTS			
Portland	90	Toronto	87
Miami	103	Sacramento	92
New York	97	Detroit	91
Minnesota	104	Dallas	92
Utah	92	Vancouver	83
Golden State	128	LA Clippers	124

Six elected to Basketball Hall of Fame

SPRINGFIELD, Massachusetts (R) — George Gervin, Gail Goodrich and David Thompson, former stars of the NBA, and Nancy Lieberman-Cline, who helped revolutionize the women's game, were elected Monday to the Basketball Hall of Fame.

Also elected were former European star Kresimir Cosic and George Yardley, a National Basketball Association star of the 1950s.

The six were selected from 20 candidates, with 18 of 24 votes from the honours committee required for induction.

Enshrinement ceremonies at the basketball Hall of Fame in Springfield, Massachusetts, will be May 6.

Gervin, who played in both the American Basketball Association and the NBA, was a 12-time All-Star and one of only three players in NBA history to win four or

more scoring titles. His career scoring average of 26.2 points a game is the sixth highest in NBA history.

"I really love the game and I truly put my heart and soul into it. It's natural to really hope for an honour like this," said Gervin. "It's something to tell your kids."

Thompson was a three-time all-American at North Carolina State and was College Basketball Player of the Year twice. He was named Most Valuable Player of the 1974 NCAA Championship tournament and his number 44 jersey is the only one ever retired at North Carolina State.

Thompson, who played in four NBA All-Star games and was the game's MVP in 1979, is the only player to win the award in both the NBA and ABA.

Thompson now devotes time telling young people about the dangers of drugs and

alcohol, speaking from bitter experience.

"I've had some ups and downs in my career, but by God's grace I've been able to overcome the downs. It's all behind me now," said Thompson.

"Nobody is perfect and everybody has skeletons in their closet. I'm just pleased now that as a former pro-athlete I'm in a position to be a positive influence on people's lives."

Gervin shared some of those ups and downs, including a drug problem of his own.

"It's an honour to be going in with David because we have quite a few battles on the court," Gervin said.

"Overcoming my addiction is the Hall of Fame in itself. I'm glad to be on the other side of the fence," said Gervin, one of only seven players in NBA history to score over 2,000 points in six consecu-

tive seasons.

He is one of only four players in league history to score in double figures in 400 or more games. Gervin, who had a 63-point game in 1978, is one of just 15 players to surpass 60 in a regular-season NBA game.

Goodrich led UCLA to two national championships and led the conference in scoring (21.5 ppg.) as the Bruins compiled a 30-0 record in 1964. He played 14 seasons in the NBA, where he was selected to the All-Star team five times and was a member of the Los Angeles Lakers' 1972 championship team.

Goodrich said he would ask his UCLA coach, the legendary John Wooden, to present him at the enshrinement ceremonies.

Lieberman, a three-time all-American at Old Dominion who led the school to two world championships in

1979 and 1980, played for the U.S. silver medal team at the 1976 Olympics.

Lieberman, who learned her basketball in the playgrounds of New York, remembered her Olympic tryouts: "I was boxing out. I was throwing elbows and people were looking at me like, who in the hell do you think you are?"

She became the first woman to play in a men's league when she signed with the Springfield Fame of the United States basketball league in 1986.

Cosic, who died at 46, last may from lymphoma, played at Brigham Young but made his reputation internationally, playing on four Olympic teams for the former Yugoslavia. He was a member of the silver medal team in 1980 and the gold medal team in 1988, and starred for two world championships winners.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMMAM HIRSHI
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ANSWERS TO WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q 1 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:

AAQT109 CK CAJT AAJ85
Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with one heart. What action do you take?

A - There is a school who believe that you should never make a take-out double when holding a five-card spade suit, but we can't believe that anyone would risk a mere one-spade overcall on this fine hand. We would make a takeout double and then bid spades should partner introduce another suit.

Q 2 - Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:

AKQ843 TS432 CA AQ82
The bidding has proceeded:
NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST
10 Pass 1A Pass
2S Pass 2 Pass 2
What action do you take?

A - You have a poor hand with shortness in partner's suit. Should you bid again and find partner is

deficient in your suit, which is highly likely, you are in -800 territory. Pass.

Q 3 - East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:

AAK1082 TQJ 0432 AKQ3
The bidding has proceeded:
EAST SOUTH WEST NORTH
10 1A 2C Pass
10 1A 2C Pass
What action do you take?

A - What would you like to do? Partner couldn't squeak out a spade raise and your doubleton heart honors are worthless. You've done your share — pass.

Q 4 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:

AKQJ8543 CK 10 Cvoid AAQT
The bidding has proceeded:
WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH
10 1A 40 7
What do you bid now?

A - No, this is not a misprint — partner did overcall one spade.

Since you'll never be able to find out exactly where partner's side strength lies, we would gamble on North having no more than one heart and jump to six spades. The slam should be no worse than on a finesse and could be laydown.

Q 5 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:

AAK8 CAQT32 OK4 +1083
Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with one spade. What action do you take?

A - Your heart suit is not robust enough to overcall at the two-level, and your minor suits are not up to snuff to merit a takeout double. If you want to get into the auction, the most sensible bid is one no trump.

Q 6 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:

AQ106 T2 CKJ82 AAQ854
The bidding has proceeded:
NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST
10 1A 2A Pass
2C Pass 2 Pass 2
What action do you take?

A - Even though the potential misfit has decreased the value of your holding, you have enough to make one move toward game. Despite the singleton heart, the logical action is to bid two no trump — three diamonds would be a game force.

Sports

Nagano '98 organisers clear some hurdles

NAGANO (R) — With just two years to go, organisers of the 1998 Nagano Winter Olympics cleared some hurdles on Tuesday but are still ensnared in controversy over a chronic lack of funds.

On the first day of a two-day meeting between the Nagano Olympic Organising Committee (NAOC) and the heads of the seven international winter sports federations, the committee won approval on some seating and scheduling issues which had dogged them, organisers said.

The Nagano Games, to be held from February 7 to 22, 1998, will be the biggest ever Winter Olympics with the addition of three new medal events — women's ice hockey, curling and snowboarding.

The final of the men's ice hockey, one of the biggest draw cards of the games, was rescheduled to start at 2:00 p.m. (0500 GMT), which would make it midnight for television viewers on the east coast of the United States and Canada.

The ice hockey federation had demanded that NAOC start the final earlier given the interest among North American fans in the participation of national hockey league professionals at the winter olympics for the first time.

"We won basic approval on this new time schedule," Naokichi Nishimura, NAOC's deputy managing director, told a news conference.

NAOC also convinced the ice hockey federation over another issue — seating capacity for the main ice hockey stadium. The main stadium, contrary to its name 'big hat,' has permanent facilities for only 5,000 seats.

This would be increased to at least 10,000 using temporary seats, Nishimura said. Tickets for Nagano's ice hockey 'dream tournament,' so called because of the participation of NHL players, could become a premier item.

The meeting also agreed on seating capacity for the figure skating rink and the venue for curling.

But the two sides have yet to discuss one of the biggest pending issues — NAOC's promise to pay for the air fare of every foreign athlete and official.

In 1991 when Nagano beat Salt Lake City for the 1998 Games, organisers pledged to pay the air fares of all the estimated 3,000 athletes and officials taking part.

That was at the height of Japan's so-called 'bubble' economy, which crashed in 1992 and was followed by almost four years of recession.

During this time, the addition of the three new medal events, the appreciation of the Japanese yen against the U.S. dollar and lack of domestic commercial sponsors have meant that NAOC would suffer an expected revenue shortfall of about 30 billion yen (\$300 million).

NAOC is in no position to pay the estimated one billion yen (\$10 million) for the air fares.

The issue was expected to be taken up in Wednesday's talks.



Tony Rominger (right) and Miguel Indurain during a stage in the Tour de France (file photo)

Title chaser Rominger fractures rib

MILAN (R) — Swiss Tony Rominger, desperate to win his first Tour de France before bowing out of cycling, fractured a rib in training on Monday, but doctors said he should be back in the saddle within days.

Rominger, 34, was last year's Giro d'Italia victory but has set his sights on the Tour, and maybe even another one-hour record to crown his 10-year career.

The accident happened as Rominger, who races for the Mapei-GB team, was training with Axel Merckx, son of Belgian tour legend Eddy Merckx. Rominger, racing behind, was caught up when Merckx's chain slipped and he fell.

Rominger came off in turn and smashed into the handlebars, fracturing a rib. Doctors strapped up his torso and ordered three to four days of strict rest but said he should be able to resume training after that.

The Swiss rider said last month he was hoping to go out on a high — with a Tour title and another one-hour record.

For many seasons the only rider who could give Spanish powerhouse Miguel Indurain a run for his money, Rominger has watched his tour dreams evaporate with disappointing regularity.

Indurain bulldozed him into second place in 1993 and he had to abandon the 1994 tour with crippling stomach problems. Last year, suffering the after effects of the giro, he limped home eighth.

But Rominger, whose one-hour record is the prize

Indurain has not been able to seize from him, said he knew the tour could be his. "I know I can win the Tour de France, I showed it in 1993," he said last month.

Rominger has won 106 races as a professional, including the Tour of Spain in 1992, 1993 and 1994 and last year's Giro.

He looks likely to skip the 1996 Giro, which starts on May 15, with the blessing of his Italo-Belgian team and sponsors since it ends just 20 days before what looks set to be a gruelling tour and could jeopardise his last victory chance.

Rominger, who has said he is planning to retire at the end of this year, wants to go out in style.

He said he would launch an attack on his own one-hour record after this year's World Championships and try to win the gold medal in the individual time trial at the Atlanta Olympics.

Rominger set a one-hour record of 53.832 km in Bordeaux in October 1994 and then increased it to 55.291 two weeks later.

Rominger is the second top rider to be injured in Italy. Italian Marco Pantani, who proved himself the best mountain climber in last year's Tour, said he was lucky to be alive after slamming into a car during a race last October in which he suffered an exposed break of his Tibia and Fibula.



Thomas Muster

Muster No. 1? Sampras, Agassi don't think so

ATLANTA (AP) — The mysterious ATP computer is spitting out numbers that say Thomas Muster is the best tennis player in the world.

To the man he knocked from the No. 1 spot, that just shows the absurdity of the current ratings system.



Andre Agassi

"It certainly reflects the fact that you can dominate on one surface and play enough tennis to mislead a lot of people," Andre Agassi said after beating Pete Sampras in an exhibition Saturday night at the Omni.

Muster, the Austrian clay-court specialist, will become No. 1 when the new ATP rankings are released next Monday. Agassi will drop to third, while Sampras moves into the No. 2 slot.

Muster won 12 tournaments last year, including the French Open, but all but one of his victories were on clay.

"I feel like he loses to Becker every time on any surface besides clay," Agassi said. "He loses to Pete every time on any surface besides clay. He loses to Courier on every other surface besides clay, and maybe even on clay."

"It doesn't undermine the fact that he had to work his butt off for a year to get there on the rankings sheet. But it doesn't change the fact that I don't put him in the top 10 when it comes to surfaces outside of clay."



Pete Sampras

Agassi, who lost in the semifinals of the Australian Open, will give up the No. 1 ranking because of a quirk in the schedule. An obscure, year-old tournament in San Jose, California, is being played a week later this year, costing Agassi 204 points.

Got that? Most people don't.

"It's so confusing," said Sampras, who was No. 1 before his third-round upset in Australia at the hands of 19-year-old Mark Philippoussis. "I don't think too many people in here understand the ranking system, how it works. It took me a couple of years to figure it out."

Sampras, who won Wimbledon and the U.S. Open last year, isn't too enamored with Muster's ability, either.

a lot of clay, managed to dominate that one surface and that's why he was ranked so high."

Both Sampras and Agassi want to eliminate the current system which bases the rankings on a player's best 14 tournaments over the previous year. Also, every player would be required to enter a certain number of tournaments on each type of surface: hardcourt, clay and grass.

Muster, for instance, skipped Wimbledon last year because he didn't want to play on grass.

"To me, the rankings system is like giving a professional golfer Mulligans," Agassi said. "They could hit a bad shot and say, 'you know what, let's just not count that one. But we will count it if you hit a better one.'"

Sampras added, "every time you step on the court, it should count. With the best-of-14 system, that's not the case. You can play 25 or 26 events, lose in the first round of a number of them and still have a pretty high ranking. That's not good for the game."

Japanese, Kazakh athletes shatter Asian records

HARBIN, China (AP) — Japan's Mitsuru Watanabe and Kazakhstan's Lioudmila Prokacheva both shattered Asian speedskating records Monday in opening races of the Asian Winter Games.

South Korea's Byun Jung-Moon edged two Japanese in men's super giant slalom skiing, and Kazakhstan swept all three medals in the men's 20-kilometre biathlon.

In speedskating, Watanabe won the men's 5,000-metre race in 7 minutes, 3.99 seconds as the five fastest skaters all beat the old Asian mark of 7:10.58 set in 1991 by Japan's Kazuhito Sato.

Skating in Harbin's brand new indoor rink, the top eight men all broke the games record of 7:16.98 set by Sato in the last games in 1990. But all were well behind the world mark of 6:34.96.

Japan's Daigo Miyaki won the silver medal in 7:05.83 and Kazakhstan's Evgeni Sanarov took the bronze in 7:06.21.

The 27-year-old Prokacheva finished the women's 3,000 metres nearly three seconds ahead of 16-year-old Eriko Seo of Japan, winning by 4:25.98 to 4:28.84.

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ENVOYS PRESENT CREDENTIALS: His Majesty King Hussein on Tuesday received the credentials of five newly appointed ambassadors to Jordan at separate ceremonies held at the Royal Court. The five ambassadors were (left to right) Lio Bao Lai of China, Ahmet Suha Umar of Turkey, Gajanan Wakankar of India, Marilyn Wickes of Australia and Francesco Cerulli of Italy. The presentation ceremonies were attended by Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti, Royal Court Chief Awn Khasawneh, His Royal Highness Prince Talal Ben Mohammad, the King's military secretary, Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid and Major-General Hmeidi Al Fayez, the King's military advisor. The ambassadors also placed wreaths at the tombs of King Abdullah Ben Hussein and King Talal Ben Abdullah (Petra photos)

NEWS IN BRIEF

Israelis arrest Palestinian rights worker

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israeli security forces on the West Bank have detained a field-worker for the Palestinian human rights group Al Haq, the movement said Tuesday. Shawan Kateb Jabarin was taken from his home near Hebron before dawn on Monday by soldiers accompanied by a plainclothes officer who identified himself as an agent of Israel's internal security agency Shin Bet, Al Haq official Hanan Qattan said. The agents also confiscated material related to Al Haq's monitoring of last month's Palestinian elections, she said. Al Haq said Mr. Jabarin's wife saw him later Monday in an Israeli military compound in Hebron but was unable to speak with him. The Israeli army had no immediate comment on the allegations. Mr. Jabarin has been arrested on several occasions since the December 1987 start of the intifada against Israeli occupation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, spending a total of some 30 months in Israeli jails, Al Haq said. The organisation, which is based in the West Bank town of Ramallah, demanded that formal charges be brought against Mr. Jabarin or that he be released.

Tehran dismisses U.S. warnings of 'threat'

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran on Tuesday dismissed as scaremongering a warning by a U.S. navy commander that its growing military machine posed a threat to Gulf shipping. "The U.S. official's statement is aimed at justifying the U.S. military presence in the Gulf and at encouraging the sale of more arms to countries in the region," Foreign Ministry spokesman Mahmoud Mohammadi said. Admiral Scott Redd, commander of the U.S. Fifth Fleet based in the Gulf, said in an interview published Sunday that Iran had tripled its air and naval presence in the region in the past 16 months. "Iran now poses a threat to navigation and aircraft flying over the Gulf," the main sea passage of world oil supplies, Adm. Redd told the United Arab Emirates daily Al Itihad. He said he had reported to the U.S. government his concern over Iran's ability to block the narrow Hormuz Straits, the only gateway to the Gulf through which nearly one-fifth of the world's oil exports pass. But Mr. Mohammadi, quoted by the Iranian press, said: "Iran wants peace and stability in the region, and kept the Hormuz Straits open under the worst conditions during the Iran-Iraq war" from 1980 to 1988.

Russia expels Israeli diplomat

TEL AVIV (R) — Russia has ordered out an Israeli diplomat whom it accused of actions not in line with diplomatic norms, Israel's Foreign Ministry said on Tuesday. "The government of Russia requested the return (to Israel) of an Israeli diplomat serving in the Israeli embassy in Moscow," Foreign Ministry spokesman Ygal Palmor told Reuters. "In the opinion of the Russians the diplomat operated not according to acceptable diplomatic norms," he said. "He was not declared persona non grata," Mr. Palmor refused to give the name or rank of the diplomat. He said the diplomat's term in Russia was to have ended in the coming summer. He gave no other details.

Arafat wants 1,200 fighters to move to Gaza

BEIRUT (R) — The Palestinian National Authority (PNA) wants to move 1,200 Palestinian fighters from Lebanon to self-rule areas, Palestinian President Yasser Arafat said in remarks published on Tuesday. "God willing, we will agree with our brothers in Lebanon on the transfer of part of our military brothers from South Lebanon," Mr. Arafat told the London-based Lebanese daily Al Hayat. "Until now, Israel has agreed on the transfer of 300, and we have presented 1,200 names," Mr. Arafat replied when asked how many fighters would move to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Mr. Arafat's main guerrilla faction Fatah has the largest guerrilla following in 12 refugee camps in Lebanon.

Fundraisers apologise for using Amir photo

TEL AVIV (AFP) — U.S. fundraisers for Israel's Bar Ilan University apologised in parliament Tuesday for using a picture of Yigal Amir, confessed assassin of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, in a brochure for the school. "We wish to apologise for the pain and embarrassment we have caused to Bar Ilan University (...) to all the citizens of Israel and to Jews throughout the world," Jane Stern Lebell and Melvin Stein said in a statement read before the Knesset education committee. The two, leaders of the American Friends of Bar Ilan, took responsibility for publication of Amir's picture in a brochure handed out late last month at a New York City fundraising dinner.

Two feared dead in Finnish blast

LAHTI, Finland (R) — A 20-year old man was killed and a second person feared dead when a blast from a suspected bomb ripped through apartments in this southwest Finland town on Tuesday, police said. Police knew of only one death but thought it "highly likely" two people may have died in the blast, which shattered the apartment block's windows and blew away the wall of the dead man's first floor apartment. "The damage in the apartment is such that it is not possible to assess whether there are one or more victims," a police spokesman said at the town. 100 kilometres north of Helsinki. Police said they suspected "Quite a large amount of explosives" had been used in the blast.

Lebanese army fires at Israeli warplanes

BEIRUT (AFP) — Lebanese army troops opened fire at Israeli warplanes flying low over the capital, without hitting their targets, military officials said Tuesday. The troops fired anti-aircraft guns from Baabda, near the defence ministry and overlooking Beirut, on Monday night. Lebanese security services, meanwhile, said the number of anti-Israeli attacks in the south of the country during January was the lowest monthly total for more than a year. There were no Israeli casualties in the 50 attacks on an Israeli-occupied border zone, compared to a monthly average of 85 attacks last year. The numbers have fallen since Israel and Syria, the main power-broker in Lebanon, resumed U.S.-brokered peace talks in December. U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher was Tuesday in Damascus on his latest peace mission.

PLO decides to draw up a new charter as compromise

AL ARISH, Egypt (Agencies) — The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) decided Tuesday to draw up a new Palestinian charter rather than meet Israel's demands to amend its 1968 covenant and drop calls for the destruction of the Jewish state.

The new charter will be based on the creation of an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital at the same time as recognising Israel, spokesman Yasser Abed Rabbo said at the end of a two-day meeting of the PLO Executive Committee.

"We discussed drawing up a new charter in the light of the new political realities rather than support Israel's demands," Abed Rabbo said.

"This new charter will be based on the creation of an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital, an Israeli withdrawal from all of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the dismantling of (Jewish) settlements and the demarcation of the borders" between Israel and a future Palestinian state, he added.

Israel has threatened to halt the peace process if the PLO did not scrap articles referring to the destruction of

the Jewish state in the existing Palestinian charter.

Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Eli Dayan on Sunday turned down the idea of a new charter.

Israel's stand is that (President Yasser) Arafat must revoke the relevant articles referring to the destruction of Israel and not simply write a new charter," he said.

But some PLO members at the meeting in Egypt's Sinai desert town of Al Arish argued that the organisation should not give in to the Israeli demands without securing anything in return.

A PLO official suggested the Palestine National Council (PNC) would meet within two months, and another official said the PLO intended to keep its pledge.

Mr. Arafat promised during the Israel-PLO peace talks that he would amend the PLO charter by spring. Israel has threatened to halt troop pullbacks and delay negotiations in May on a final peace settlement unless Mr. Arafat follows through with the promise.

We discussed that we have pledges concerning the covenant and we are going to fulfill these pledges," Mahmoud Abbas, a committee member, said after the

meeting.

The committee members met for a second time Tuesday. After the first meeting ended earlier in the morning, officials said they did not expect to set a date for the PNC meeting until after Ramadan, which ends Feb. 20.

Mr. Abed Rabbo, the Palestinian information minister, suggested the meeting would take place within two months.

To amend the charter, Mr. Arafat needs a two-thirds vote of the council, which must be convened by the Executive Committee.

Just 11 of the executive committee's 18 members arrived in Al Arish, a seaside city in Egypt's Sinai peninsula, for the meeting. Five committee members have resigned to protest the peace talks with Israel, one was sick, and Farouk Kaddouni, who serves as the Palestinians' foreign minister, did not attend.

The committee, which meets whenever Mr. Arafat convenes it, has been overshadowed by the Palestinian leadership in the West Bank and Gaza. But many of its members are prominent, and

(Continued on page 7)

Bahrain tightens security at electricity installations

MANAMA (AFP) — Bahraini authorities have stepped up security around electrical installations after 88 of them were attacked in a wave of political unrest, the Gulf Daily News reported on Tuesday.

Rioters this year have destroyed eight sub-stations each costing 10,000 dinars (\$37,000) and each serving up to 200 people, the English-language daily said. Eighty other installations were also damaged.

Electricity and Water Minister Abdullah Juma told the paper that rioters also set fire to street-lighting units, damaged poles, overhead lines and electric conductors.

It took three days to repair major damage and minor damage was fixed the same day, he said.

"We are protecting sub-stations in some areas by erecting concrete blocks and steel doors," the minister said. There are a total of 2,000 sub-stations in Bahrain.

The worst political violence since Bahrain became independent in 1971 broke out after the arrest on December 5, 1994 of a Shiite cleric who demanded the restoration of parliament which was suspended in 1975.

At least 13 people were killed in clashes between

mainly Shiite protesters and the Sunni-led authorities from December 1994 to April 1995.

Bahrain on Tuesday accused Qatar's semi-official newspapers of distorting the facts about the unrest.

Reports and comments in Al Watan, Al Rayah and other newspapers "are distorted facts," Bahrain's minister of cabinet affairs and information, Mohammad Al Mutawa, said.

Such coverage "upsets Bahrainis and is harmful to the special relationship between the brotherly peoples of Qatar and Bahrain," Mr. Mutawa said in a statement. "I am fully confident that the Qatari people are not supporting such (media) campaigns," he said, adding that Bahrain would not engage in "media rows at the present time."

Al Watan last week called on the Bahraini authorities to release political prisoners to restore confidence in the troubled Gulf island state.

Relations between Qatar and Bahrain, already strained by a territorial dispute, soured further last month when the Qatari media carried interviews with Bahraini Shiite Muslim opposition leaders living in exile in Britain, who condemned "repression" in their country.

Algerian press lambasts curb on reporting unrest

ALGIERS (AFP) — Independent newspapers in Algeria, gripped by an insurrection by armed Islamic extremists, on Tuesday denounced an order by authorities that they abide by government orders in reporting "terrorism."

Al Watan charged it was "a return to press blackout," while Liberty carried the headline: "Silence over the massacres."

Referring to the date of presidential elections, Al Khabar claimed the order was "the return to the situation before Nov. 16."

"The press is strongly invited to be reserved," added the Tribune.

"Publications are obliged to stick to laconic statements for the official agency APS, which report the number of terrorists struck down by security forces, but, drawing a curtain on the thousands of deaths, often omit the bomb attacks, the civilian assassinations and the spectacular operations of armed groups, which are nonetheless difficult to hide," wrote the Tribune.

An Arabic language daily Al Khabar summed up the feeling with a front-page caricature, based on the three wise monkeys and portraying a journalist with his ears muffled.

When pressed, Mr. Netanyahu said representatives of his government could meet with Mr. Arafat and the other Palestinian leaders, but only they did more to convince him they no longer seek Israel's elimination and acted more forcefully against militants.

"As prime minister I will make sure my government has contacts with the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) on condition they

fled, his hand in front of his mouth, and a banner over his eyes with the words "Algerian journalist."

In a statement in Paris, international organisation Reporters Sans Frontiers (RSF) also condemned the Ministry of Interior's "censure" on information linked to Islamic groups.

It called on President Liamine Zeroul to lift the "measures hindering the right to information" and "in particular" the ministerial decree of June 1994 concerning the treatment of "security" information.

RSF added that, since the enforcement of the 1994 decree, at least 19 newspapers have been possessed or suspended, and 50 journalists have been assassinated in killings attributed to armed Islamic groups.

On Monday, the Algerian government told newspapers to obey a decree stipulating that the information they publish on its battle with Islamic fundamentalist rebels must come from government sources.

In a statement issued to newspaper publishers, the Interior Ministry warned that violations of this rule will be met with "strict application of the law." It did not elaborate.

Serbs suspend all contacts with Bosnia in prisoner row

BELGRADE (Agencies) — Bosnian Serb leaders said on Tuesday they had suspended contacts with Muslim-Croat authorities and would no longer attend meetings on federation territory until captured Serb officers were released.

"We have decided to stop negotiations and not to go to the Muslim part any longer until we get the... Serbs released," Dragan Bozanic, "information minister" for the Bosnian Serbs, said by telephone from Pale, outside Sarajevo.

Separatist Serb leaders announced the decision after the Muslim-led government revealed it had arrested two Serb army officers and several other men for investigations over war crimes.

Mr. Bozanic said Bosnian Serb representatives would no longer travel to the government-held city centre for talks on Dayton peace accord and demanded future meetings be held on "neutral" ground.

He called on the NATO-led peace Implementation Force (IFOR) to secure the release of the men, who include General Djordje Djukic and Colonel Aleksa Krstanovic.

The Serbs say the two men

were seized on their way to talks with NATO commanders and their arrest represented a gross violation of the Dayton deal.

The Serb news agency, SRNA accused the IFOR of "not reacting to warnings by the Serb republic that the incorrect attitude of the Muslim authorities" risked endangering implementation of the Bosnia peace accord."

Under the Dayton accords for Bosnia, the country is split between a Croat-Muslim federation and a Serb republic, with a weak central government for the overall republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

IFOR and the Bosnian government have only spoken of eight detainees, the men having been arrested in three separate incidents in government controlled territory between Jan. 20 and Feb. 2.

Three of the Serb soldiers are to be released but five others, including the general and colonel, will remain in custody, Bosnia state security chief Bakir Alispahic said.

Gen. Djukic, Col. Krstanovic and their driver Radenko Todorovic were arrested on Jan. 30 when Bosnian police went on alert on a tip-off that they were on

government territory. "We have evidence that these persons were involved in war crimes against civilians, even in the Sarajevo area," Mr. Alispahic said.

Gen. Djukic and Col. Krstanovic will be investigated by Bosnian judicial authorities and investigators from the Hague-based International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICT), Mr. Alispahic said.

Under the Dayton peace agreement, the factions can arrest war-crime suspects but charges must be submitted to the ICT for approval.

Mr. Alispahic said the driver and two other soldiers would be released "soon."

The two, Mico Dosenovic and Milan Bogunovic, were in fact witnesses to the investigations of the five that will be kept in custody and would "most probably be released very soon," the security chief said.

Another group of three soldiers of the Bosnian Serb army were arrested after police at a routine traffic control found in their vehicle "guns, hand-grenades and significant amounts of ammunition," Mr. Alispahic added.

COLUMN

Joan Collins, Random House face off in court

NEW YORK (R) — A courtroom battle began Monday pitting actress Joan Collins against publishing giant Random House, which is demanding a \$1.2 million refund for a manuscript it said was unfinished and unpubbable. Random House is suing Collins, 62, to recover the \$1.2 million she got on a two-book contract that the company claims she breached. Collins, the British actress best known for playing the scheming Alexis Carrington on the popular television series Dynasty, is fighting back. She has counter-sued for \$3.6 million she claims the publishing house still owes her. According to court papers, Random House editor Joni Evans decided Collins' manuscript was incomplete, needed a major overhaul and required a lot of rewriting. But Collins' lawyer, Kenneth David Burrows, said under the 1990 book deal negotiated by the late Hollywood superagent Irving "Swifty" Lazar, the actress was guaranteed the money even if the book was rejected by the publisher. Collins said she delivered two and a third usable manuscripts and an outline on time, according to court papers. Lawyers for both sides said they planned to call publishing experts to testify as to what constitutes a completed manuscript. Jury selection began Monday in state Supreme Court in Manhattan. Collins, who arrived in New York from London over the weekend, was expected to appear once the six-member panel is chosen. Her sister is best-selling novelist Jackie Collins.

Dozens of S. Koreans collapse in public bath

SEOUL (AFP) — More than 50 people collapsed in a public bath and were admitted to hospitals in the southern South Korean port city of Pusan after complaining of a pungent odor from the bath water, police said Tuesday. Some 52 men and women taking separate hot tub baths in the Chungba Public Baths around noon Sunday, passed out when the water suddenly acquired a "strange and strong" odor, Pusan Prefectural police quoted the victims as saying. Police were testing samples of the water to ascertain the cause, a police spokesman told AFP, adding that "accidental or intentional" chemical leakage was highly possible. All of the victims, who were hospitalised for one or two days, have returned home, the police said.

Bamboo shortage hits Beijing pandas

BEIJING (AFP) — Beijing Zoo's 14 giant pandas are seriously ill because of insufficient supplies of bamboo shoots, the Xinhua News Agency reported Monday. A panda eats an average of 10 kilograms (22 pounds) of fresh bamboo shoots daily and the zoo can only supply 1.5 kilograms (3.3 pounds) per animal, the agency added. Farmers in Jiangxi province in Henan province have traditionally grown bamboo for the Beijing pandas, but they now turning to more profitable crops, the report said. Bamboo is also increasingly used as scaffolding on construction sites, it added. Zoo keepers have been forced to feed the pandas beef, eggs, milk, apples and carrots. The dietary changes have caused digestive disorders, diarrhoea, weight loss and lowered the pandas' resistance to disease, it said.

Netanyahu recognises 'facts' -- but not Arafat

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israel's right-wing opposition leader, lagging badly in the polls with elections approaching, has said that as prime minister he would not try to undo Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza.

In a bid to soften his hard-line image, Likud party head Benjamin Netanyahu conceded that the current government's agreement with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) have "created facts on the ground."

"I can't ignore reality," Mr. Netanyahu said during a 90-minute interview on Israel's Channel 2 TV seen as the opening salvo in the opposition leader's campaign. If elected, he said, "we will work within the reality. We will not change what exists."

At the same time, Mr. Netanyahu would not agree

to meetings with Yasser Arafat, who led the Palestinians towards recognition of Israel and shared the 1994 Nobel Peace Prize with Israel's leaders.

"I will not meet with Yasser Arafat," he said, comparing the Palestinian leader to Kurt Waldheim, who was snubbed by Israel as Austria's president because of revelations about his activities with the German army during World War II.

When pressed, Mr. Netanyahu said representatives of his government could meet with Mr. Arafat and the other Palestinian leaders, but only they did more to convince him they no longer seek Israel's elimination and acted more forcefully against militants.

"As prime minister I will make sure my government has contacts with the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) on condition they

prove to us they have abandoned their intention to destroy Israel," he said.

Pressed to explain how he would maintain contact with the PNA while refusing to meet its head, Mr. Netanyahu said:

"I won't meet that man but representatives of the government of Israel will meet representatives of the authority. We will assign the appropriate level. This is totally acceptable."

Mr. Netanyahu was asked about a 1993 sex scandal in which Mr. Netanyahu went on television to say he had an extra-marital affair and was being blackmailed for it.

"I think that was an unfortunate incident that is over now. I regret the incident itself because it deeply hurt what is dear to me, my relations with my wife, my family. I have deep regrets."

Mr. Netanyahu took centre stage on Monday after cut-

ting a deal between his hard-line Likud and the ultra-nationalist Tsomet party to field a joint list of parliamentary candidates in elections.

Tsomet leader Rafael "Rafal" Eitan — a former army chief who once publicly compared Arabs to cockroaches — agreed to drop his plan to run for prime minister in return for the number two position on the Likud-Tsomet list.

Mr. Peres told reporters he did not feel threatened by the new force.

"Labour has a (peace) plan. This merger might have brought two (parties) together but it did not create a plan. Voters will have to choose between Labour's plan and the luck of a plan which is the Likud's speciality," he said.

Mr. Netanyahu said a future Likud government would shut down PLO offices in Jerusalem and repeal any

Palestinian demand to expand their autonomous zones or upgrade them to full statehood.

"They (the Palestinians) will run their own lives," he said. "But we must not allow this entity to approach the dimensions of a state."

Mr. Netanyahu told Channel 2 that he could achieve peace with the Palestinians and other Arabs while sticking to hardline positions.

"I have experience in talks with the Arabs," said Mr. Netanyahu, who has served as Israel's United Nations ambassador and deputy foreign minister. "The Arabs adjust their expectations to what they believe they can get... they're very realistic, they'll adjust themselves."

That goes for Syria, too, Mr. Netanyahu said. "I will remain on the Golan Heights... all of the Golan Heights."